Tuesday of the Fourth Week of Lent

Gospel text (*Jn* 5:1-16): There was a feast of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. Now there is in Jerusalem at the Sheep Gate a pool called in Hebrew Bethesda, with five porticoes. In these lay a large number of ill, blind, lame, and crippled. One man was there who had been ill for thirty-eight years. When Jesus saw him lying there and knew that he had been ill for a long time, he said to him (…), "Rise, take up your mat, and walk." Immediately the man became well, took up his mat, and walked. Now that day was a Sabbath (…). Therefore, the Jews began to persecute Jesus because he did this on a Sabbath.

The fourth Gospel does not derive from the Gnosticism

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Today, while we contemplate this episode, we consider the origin of the Fourth Gospel, which peculiarity has led the modern critical investigation to doubt its "historical" character, considering it as a late "theological reconstruction" (posterior to the Apostles). However, some papyri of the 2nd century, found in Egypt, proved that it must have been written already in the 1st century…

Some authors (Bultman…) declared that the guidelines of the fourth Gospel came from the "Gnosticism". But historically "gnosis" appeared as a spiritual movement not before the end of the 1st Century. Finally, the investigation about John confirmed that this Gospel: 1. Is based in an extraordinary accurate knowledge of places and times (characteristic of someone who is perfectly familiar with the Palestine of Jesus' time); 2. His argumentation is based on the Old Testament and is profoundly rooted in the Judaism of that time.

—John's Gospel explicitly tells us that it dates back to an eyewitness of the Crucified: "He who saw it has borne witness… and he knows that he tells the truth, that you also may believe" (Jn 19,35).