

Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time (B)

Gospel text (Mk 2,1-12): When Jesus returned to Capernaum some time later, news spread that He was at home, and so many people gathered that there was no longer room even outside the door.

While Jesus was preaching the Word to them, some people brought a paralyzed man to him. The four men who carried him couldn't get near Jesus because of the crowd, so they opened the roof above the room where Jesus was and, through the hole, lowered the man on his mat. When Jesus saw the faith of these people, He said to the paralytic, «My son, your sins are forgiven». Now, some teachers of the Law who were sitting there wondered within themselves, «How can he speak like this insulting God? Who can forgive sins except God?».

At once Jesus knew through his spirit what they were thinking and asked, «Why do you wonder? Is it easier to say to this paralyzed man: 'Your sins are forgiven', or to say: 'Rise, take up your mat and walk?' But now you shall know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins». And He said to the paralytic, «Stand up, take up your mat and go home». The man rose and, in the sight of all those people, he took up his mat and went out. All of them were astonished and praised God saying, «We have never seen anything like this!».

«Some people brought a paralyzed man to him»

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Today, upon reading the Gospel, we center our attention on three concrete moments: a paralyzed man, a group of friends, and Jesus.

In the paralyzed man we can see our own reflection; we can all be paralyzed, as our sins paralyze us in our path to God. There are times when, either we do not realize it or we think that all is well as we are, or that we shall eventually solve or put some order in our relations with God.

«Then, some people brought a paralyzed man to him» (Mk 2:3). We need truly good friends that take us to God and may overcome our resistance. It is highly possible that the paralyzed man, after realizing the commotion his friends had created, asked them to halt and postpone it for some other day, that there were a lot of people... Not to speak of when «they opened the roof above the room where Jesus was» (Mk 2:4): all the noise they would make, the dust, the bother to all those who were there and their shouting because they could not hear what Jesus was saying, etc.

But true friends are not afraid of troubles, they truly love and they want the best for us, because «it is peculiar of a friend to take care of friends, mostly of those friends more in need» (St. Thomas Aquinas). Let us wonder today whether we have any true friends that would be willing to take us before God. Let us also wonder whether we are true friends and we really try to take those we love to God. We should not forget that they will also oppose resistance. Am I really a good friend? Can the others trust me to help them getting closer to Jesus?

And what about Jesus? He comes to bring the true salvation to us, to deliver us from the paralysis, to forgive our sins. Do I help others to come near the Confession?

Saint Mary, Mother of God and our Mother, take us and give us to God: may we, with her help, also bring everybody to Jesus!