

JANUARY 17, 2020  
Memorial of St. Anthony, Abbot  
Mark 2: 1-12

HELP OTHERS IN ANY WAY WE CAN

There are times that we can not do things alone, we need the help of others. This is the situation of the paralytic man in our gospel for today. The four men who carried their friend to the source of life and healing is a powerful call to be helpful to others. The people were blocking the door, but they were determined to get closer to Jesus that they opened a hole in the roof – an image of creativity and willpower despite obstacles and barriers. These four men wanted to make their paralytic friend to get back from his fuller life and recognized that Jesus is the only one who can give this because in their heart and mind, Jesus is the source of health and life.

On the other hand, what is the attitude of the scribes and Pharisees, the so-called learned and teachers of the Law? They were upset of Jesus' treatment of sinners. They questioned Jesus authority in their hearts: "Why does this fellow speak in this way? It is blasphemy! Who can forgive sins but God alone?"<sup>1</sup> Jesus knowing what is in their hearts, did the unthinkable. After forgiving the sins of the paralytic man, Jesus commanded him to stand and walk: "But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins—he said to the paralytic— 'I say to you, stand up, take your mat and go to your home.'"<sup>2</sup> This is the healing power of God's forgiveness and compassion. By healing the paralytic man physically and spiritually, Jesus proved to them that His authority came from God and the great power of God's redeeming love and mercy.

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<sup>1</sup> Mark 2:7 NRSV Catholic Bible Press USA

<sup>2</sup> Mark 2: 10-11 NRSV Catholic Bible Press USA

Bishop Ambrose of Milan (339-397 AD), an early church father, explains the gospel pointing out Christ's power to heal the whole person, physical and spiritual: "But the Lord, wanting to save sinners, shows himself to be God both by his knowledge of secrets and by the wonder of his actions. Alongside of healing the wounds of body and mind, he also forgives the sins of the spirit, removes the weakness of the flesh, and thus heals the whole person."<sup>3</sup>

My sisters and brothers, they are two things that our gospel is pointing us today. First, the Lord is always willing and ready to bring us healing of body, mind, and spirit. So, is there any area in our lives that cripples us from walking in Christ's transforming love and forgiveness? Approach Him, pray to Him and believe. Second, there are times we can do little for ourselves and depend on others for health, for life, for safety. Cry out and other will help us. And when we hear others crying out, like the friends of the paralysed man, let us help them to their feet, carry their burdens according to our own capacity and bring them from misery to hope. Let us help them in any way we can.

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<sup>3</sup> [dailyscripture.servantsoftheword.org](http://dailyscripture.servantsoftheword.org)