

Thursday's Gospel: Your Sins are Forgiven

Gospel for Thursday in the 13th Week of Ordinary Time, and commentary.

Gospel (*Mt 9:1-8*)

And getting into a boat Jesus crossed over and came to his own city. And behold, they brought to him a paralytic, lying on his bed; and when Jesus saw their faith he said to the paralytic, "Take heart, my son; your sins are forgiven." And behold, some of the scribes said to themselves, "This man is blaspheming." But Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said,

“Why do you think evil in your hearts? For which is easier, to say, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Rise and walk’? But that you may know that the Son of man has authority on earth to forgive sins”—he then said to the paralytic—“Rise, take up your bed and go home.”

And he rose and went home. When the crowds saw it, they were afraid, and they glorified God, who had given such authority to men.

Commentary

Jesus’ fame is spreading and wherever he goes sick people come to him for healing. Now he arrives in Capernaum, his own city, and a paralyzed man is brought to him on a stretcher.

As soon as Jesus sees him, he says: “take heart, my son; your sins are forgiven.” Jesus looks into the person's heart. Yes, that person's body needs to be healed, but his heart is also in need of God's forgiveness.

The Pharisees, on hearing Jesus' words, think badly of him. They have a small, closed heart, incapable of opening to the truth. They think they have all the truth themselves and end up not knowing it.

Jesus reproaches the Pharisees gently and tells them: ““Why do you think evil in your hearts? For which is easier, to say, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Rise and walk’”?”

And Jesus works the miracle: “Rise, take up your mat and go home.” The paralytic gets up, takes hold of the stretcher and goes to his house. He returns home completely cured – with a clean heart and able to lead a

normal life. And those who witnessed the miracle return home glorifying God for the wonders they have seen.

Saint Josemaría contemplated God's readiness to forgive with amazement. He once said: "If we consider things slowly, we will see that a Creator God is admirable. A God who goes to the Cross to redeem us is wonderful. But a God who forgives, a God who purifies us, who cleanses us, is truly splendid! Is there anything more fatherly? Do you hold onto any rancor against your children? Isn't it true that you don't? So too God our Lord, as soon as we ask for forgiveness, forgives us completely. "How splendid!"

Jesus awaits us in the sacrament of Penance to forgive us as he forgave the paralytic and to fill our hearts with peace through divine forgiveness.

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