

: HEALING OF THE PARALYTIC :



"In this season of abstinence, O Christ, You have shone as a Light on those who walk in the darkness of sin. Bring us to the holy day of your Passion, that we may cry to you: 'Arise, O God, and have mercy on us!' "

Matins for the Sunday of the Palsied Man
The Second Sunday of the Great Fast

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The Sunday of the Palsied Man

Sister Angela Marie McCrovitz

"I order you; stand up, pick up your mat and walk!"

Mark 2:11

Capernaum is a small town which reveals on every side the desolation of human existence. We villagers are limited to the gnawing poverty of life—to barefoot children, lepers, and blind beggars who live in small dingy houses. We are hungry and in need of companionship. We have always thought that we were alone. Then one day a prophet emerged with outstretched arms and a receptive heart to us who were almost forsaken.

I was an object of derision, of public disdain, and mockery. And yet, who would ever believe that this man and prophet named Jesus would some day look at me with His meek eyes and forgive me, heal me, love me! I was truly the victim of physical and spiritual paralysis, and my patience for my handicap had rapidly depleted. Four of my closest companions heard my silent cry of anguish and attempted to draw me out of my world of loneliness.

At first, there weren't many who listened to Jesus, but it didn't take long before the crowds grew and pressed in on Him. Because of this, I could not get close to this man I had longed to touch and see. But my friends found a way, and before I knew it, I was in the presence of the One with Whom I longed to be.

Suddenly, I heard a call to rise, to stand up straight with shoulders back and head held high. I was asked to be free, to regain my integrity. The choice was mine! Would I stand or fall? Could I stand securely after stumbling all my life? In my sin, I have slouched and savored that which is bent and crushed over. But now I would stand and glorify God! And as I was attempting to take such a risk, this Jesus challenged me to another level.

Walk! Walk without fault as the righteous do. Walk in a way worthy of my call to stand in faith and trust. My sins were forgiven me. From this day on, I would follow God in total self-surrender.

During the holy greatfast season, each of us realizes how we struggle to walk before God—to walk "the Way" of Jesus, to follow Him to Jerusalem where He will secure eternal salvation for us, His followers. Our spiritual palsy and religious paralysis can be healed if we approach the merciful Lord.

SCRIPTURE READINGS: Hebrews 1:10 - 2:3

Mark 2:1-12