

Homily, Tuesday, April 4, 2014

John 5:1-3a 5-6

Christ's power is strong. Nothing is impossible for Him. The man in the Gospel was ill for thirty-eight years. His sickness serves as an example of a life of sin. He can heal the sick; He can also forgive their sins, like a true confession.

The sick man has attempted to enter the pool, he has tried, but someone else has beaten him to it. Perhaps without this detailed account of his failure, he might not have been cured. The sick man is admitting both his both his personal weakness and the desire to plunge into the pool. This moves Jesus to compassion. This is the remedy to all of our illnesses: presenting ourselves to Christ as we truly are, with all of our weakness, and thus moving him to compassion

After this Jesus found the sick man in the temple area and said to him, "Look, you are well, do not sin, anymore." It would be a pity if this man, who is deeply moved by Jesus and made whole, afterwards dedicated himself to a life of vice. From the Gospel passage, it would seem that Jesus has cured him in order to allow him to utilize his time and energy for the benefit of the Kingdom. Christ warns the sick man that if he misuses his new health, he could be worse off than before. Hopefully, his healing will produce a conversion and make him a herald of the Kingdom. This happens also in the sacrament of reconciliation: After forgiving our sins, Christ tells us, "Go in peace and proclaim to the world the wonderful works of God who has brought you salvation."

Celebrant: Dear my brothers, Jesus healing the man by the pool of Bethesda teaches us about baptism in which sin is forgiven and new life is given.

1. We pray for those, who are preparing for their Easter Baptism. May they be filled with hope and joy as they seek to dedicate themselves to Christ—*Let us pray to the Lord.*
2. That those preparing for Full Communion with the Catholic Church may deepen their baptismal commitment to Christ. And that we may not be guilty of passing judgment on those who do good, but always rejoice when God works his wonders through others.
Let us pray to the Lord.
3. We pray for the people of the world, who are being persecuted, that there may be an end to violence and a restoration of peace and human rights and religious freedom for many countries.—*Let us pray to the Lord.*

You may add your own intentions...

Celebrant: Lord, You are our refuge and strength in time of distress. Look with love upon those who live in difficult or dangerous conditions and bring them to peace and harmony. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Fr. Basil Van Pham Nguyen