



When Jesus returned to Capernaum after some days, it became known that he was at home. Many gathered together so that there was no longer room for them, not even around the door, and he preached the word to them. They came bringing to him a paralytic carried by four men. Unable to get near Jesus because of the crowd, they opened up the roof above him. After they had broken through, they let down the mat on which the paralytic was lying. When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, “Child, your sins are forgiven.” Now some of the scribes were sitting there asking themselves, “Why does this man speak that way? He is blaspheming. Who but God alone can forgive sins?” Jesus immediately knew in his mind what they were thinking to themselves, so he said, “Why are you thinking such things in your hearts? Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, ‘Your sins are forgiven,’ or to say, ‘Rise, pick up your mat and walk’? But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority to forgive sins on earth”—he said to the paralytic, “I say to you, rise, pick up your mat, and go home.” He rose, picked up his mat at once, and went away in the sight of everyone. They were all astounded and glorified God, saying, “We have never seen anything like this.”

Introductory Prayer: Jesus, thank you for this time to be with you. I humbly offer you my intention to set all my distractions aside so that I can encounter you, my Lord and my God. I hope in you and know that you could never let me down. I love you and long to love you with all of my strength. Aware of my misery and weakness, I trust in your mercy and love.

Petition: Lord, increase my zeal for souls.

1. The Paralytic: One day, four men carried a friend to Jesus. It made all the difference in the world to the friend, for he was paralyzed and was unable to approach Jesus on his

own. He had heard of the miracles Jesus had performed, but had never seen them. His own healing was out of the question: he couldn't go to Jesus on his own. Had his four friends not stepped in and brought him to Jesus, he would never have been cured. Their faith and love made his healing possible. Who does Jesus want me to bring to him? Do I invite people to prayer and adoration? Do I invite people to Mass and confession?

2. The Four Friends: These four men were not stopped by the obstacles in their way. How long they traveled isn't mentioned, but even a short distance is tiring when carrying a man on a mat. When they arrived at the house, it was full of people who had traveled to hear and see Jesus and to be cured by him. It was impossible for the men to get inside the house through the door, but they didn't give up. They didn't quit. They carried their friend up to the rooftop and lowered him down into the house. By persevering we can achieve anything. Love knows no boundaries or limits.

3. Jesus: God wants to save so many people. He wants to bring real healing into their lives, but he wants to heal them through us. Jesus could have found the paralyzed man. He chose, rather, to let the others bring the man to him. Jesus wanted to heal him, but without the charity in the hearts of the four men, the healing might never have been accomplished. Who does Jesus wish to encounter through me? How can I be a better instrument of his love?

Conversation with Christ: Lord, help me to realize more deeply that you want me involved in salvation history. I'm on the front lines. You entrust souls to me, and you want to bless their lives through my prayers, my sacrifices and my work. Increase my love for these souls. They need my help and my fidelity. I don't want to let them down. Help me to be faithful.

Resolution: I will make a sacrifice today for the person most in need of God's grace.