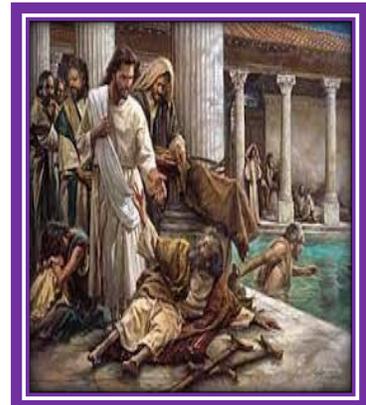
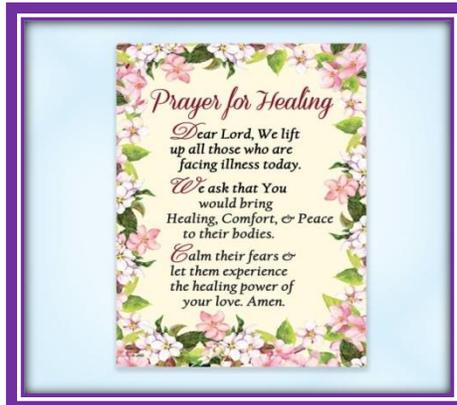
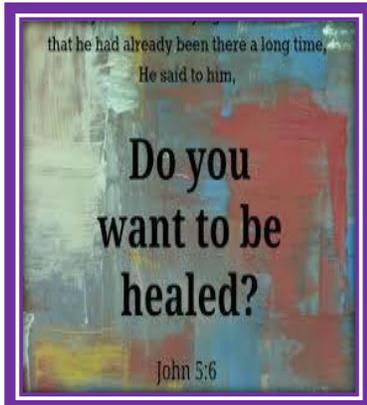


March 24, 2020 – Tuesday of 4th Week of Lent



**Delaying no more, in drawing closer to the Streams of Graces and Healing**

**Ez 47:1-9,12 and Jn 5:1-3, 5-16**

Life often takes us through paralyzing and crippling situations. Today's Gospel passage is a beautiful presentation of **"on how to have our heads raised up, in hope and trust, despite many crushing and crippling causes in life"**. Jesus is in Jerusalem for the feast of the Passover. The Jews had three major feasts – the Feast of Tabernacles, the Feast of Passover and the Feast of Pentecost. Although only adult male Jews living within a 15-mile radius of Jerusalem were bound to participate in the Passover feast, Jesus went to Jerusalem as a practicing Jew. As he passed through the town, he came near a pool, named Bethzatha. Jesus encounters a person there, who has been ill for a very long period... thirty-eight years! (Jn 5:5)

The sickness had immobilized him. But more than his physical body, it seems, that the sickness had crippled also his mind: His way of thinking seemed jammed in having hope in life. His outlook on life seemed blurred to see optimism and hope. His perspective of people seemed to distort his confidence and trust.

When Jesus questions the man, "Do you want to be well?", the man answers not with a positive affirmation or an optimistic assertion. Instead, he begins to get into a complaining and a pitiable mode, " Sir, I have no one..." (Jn 5: 7). A ray of hope was offered to him but instead, the man continued to see only the dark clouds. A glimpse of joy was revealed to him but instead, the man persisted on the sad aspects alone. The long period of sickness had blotted his vision and faded his hopes. Yet, his answer revealed some desire

to be healed, and in response to that faint desire, the Lord cures the man with a word, 'Get up... and walk'. **The Lord today encourages us to have hopeful desires, which are greatly needed at this time of crisis.**

And immediately the man became well, took up his mat and walked! The presence of the Lord vanished away the man's doubts and lame excuses. The mighty word of the Lord purged away the man's feelings of looking at life negatively. The man who had the tendency to probably "procrastinate – delay and postpone" now becomes "proactive!"

The man became proactive casting away his attitude of complaining to become a person of courage, dropping off his crippling attitude of "none-to-help" and picking up the mat of power and grace.

Problems beset each of us in this world. Difficulties surround all of us, at various times and situations. Jesus gives us this courage and the hope to "not postpone or delay" matters connected to our spiritual life. Such a proactive action is spurred by the mighty love and mercy of the Lord. Such a pro-active move is an approach, impelled by a tremendous faith and hope in the Lord.

You and I very often may find ourselves in crippling situations of life. We may keep on lying down. We may keep on being a "complaint-box". We may keep on postponing our good and only blame people and situations. Or... We may raise up our heads to see the Lord challenging us to walk. We may garner strength and courage and be bold to pick up our mats of suffering. We may imbue ourselves with the Lord's power to never let anything cripple our minds.

**We are today invited to draw Power and Strength from the living streams of God's Grace, offered to us, in the Sacraments and in particular, in this time of immense struggle and challenge, through various acts of devotion especially the Rosary, Stations of the Cross, Devotional Reading of the Bible, Chaplet of the Divine Mercy, etc.**

Let us delay no more, in drawing closer to these Streams of Graces and Healing. Yes, Postponement in spiritual matters, is indeed a perilous matter. Let's remember: Those people who expect salvation at the eleventh hour often die at 10:30! Shall we be ready, "to rise, take up our mats, and walk?"

**Jesus says, 'Seek and you will find'. If we keep entering into our deep-seated desire for the Lord and the life he brings, then we will**

**find the Lord, wherever we are at this time of social isolation, and the Lord's presence will be truly life-giving for us.**

**Let us pray:**

Lord Jesus, put within my heart a burning desire to come closer to Your Streams of Graces and Healing. Let your Holy Spirit purify my heart and renew in me a fervent love and desire to do whatever is pleasing to you and to refuse whatever is contrary to your will.

**Jesus, I Trust In You**