

Today's Gospel passage reminds us that Jesus is capable of healing us in many ways. All of us are familiar with his physical healings of people's infirmities. The Gospels abound with cleansed lepers, lame people walking free, blind people seeing and deaf people hearing because they approached Jesus with faith and asked for His help. We have often done the same when we are ill, or those we love are ill. We pray that Jesus will heal us, and get us through.

But Jesus wants to offer us an even more powerful healing. He longs to forgive our sins, and relieve the guilt that weighs us down and paralyzes us and keeps us from moving forward. Jesus wants to heal our broken spirits and make them whole and free again. This is the greatest gift He can give to us, with an impact that far exceeds our physical well-being in importance. This is the gift Jesus hopes we will seek from Him in faith.

The paralytic was carried to Jesus by people of strong faith. They were undaunted by their desire to bring their friend into Jesus' presence. We are invited to imitate them, carrying one another to Jesus in prayer and supporting each other in times of trial and weakness. Our faith can move Jesus to help others when their faith or their ability to approach the Lord on their own is shaken. Jesus longs for all of us to be reveling in the forgiveness and new life that is offered to us...we need only have the faith to ask for it, for ourselves and for others.

It is perfectly okay to ask the Lord for other things, like physical health, safety, dignified work, people who love us, financial security...the Lord wants us to have all these things. But first let us set our hearts on the gift He most wants to give, forgiveness of sin so that we can have life in the Spirit.

God bless you.  
Fr. Pat