

SERMON
Second Sunday of Lent (Mk 2:1-12)
8 March 2026

Today's Gospel passage speaks of a miracle of the Lord, namely, the healing of a paralytic in the city of Capernaum, near the Lake of Galilee, where Christ was teaching in a house. The crowd was such that it was impossible for anyone to enter through the door and approach the Lord, but in this truly unprecedented situation, four people appear carrying an unfortunate paralytic on a stretcher. The sick man could not approach the Lord in the normal way- through the door- because of the crowd. Nevertheless, this obstacle does not discourage them, and carrying the sick man, they climb onto the roof, open it, and lower the paralytic before Christ.

The Lord, praises the faith of the attendants and the sick man's, who obviously had such a strong desire to approach Christ and so he had begged the four men to do everything possible. Christ addresses the sick person and says to him, "*Your sins are forgiven*". He does not say to him, "*I heal you*", but I forgive your sins, which will provoke the inner thoughts of those present familiar with the Mosaic law. *How is it possible for a person to forgive sins, when only God can do that?*" They then receive the answer from the Lord, Who as God also knew their innermost thoughts, saying "*what is easier to say, your sins are forgiven or take up your bed and walk?*".

This is not an actual dilemma, because here Christ tells us something fundamental and which we must understand correctly, because it is a delicate issue. Clearly, Christ connects the problem of sickness, corruption and, by extension, death, with sin. Not, however, with the personal sin of each one, and this is the delicate point, because we are in danger, if we do not understand it correctly, to believe that God punishes the sinner with sickness and death; God is never angry and punishing. He only loves. The concept of sin here has a deep and fundamental dimension – an

ontological and not a moral dimension – it is the sin of human nature, of humanity as a whole, which ruptures the life relationship it has with God, and the human person falls out of the state of grace because of sin. This constitutes the sin that the Lord speaks of here, and which not only has spiritual consequences but also brings about biological deterioration, sickness, and death. By forgiving this sin, the Lord also heals all its offspring, that is, biological deterioration.

We see that the forgiveness of sins and healing occur when a person approaches Christ and communes with Him in a deep and meaningful relationship, and not just an emotional one. It is no coincidence that today our Church celebrates the great Father and Teacher of the faith, Saint Gregory Palamas, who in his time passionately defended exactly this possibility of the human person's participation in the divine life, because this was in the final analysis what was at stake in the theological controversy that had erupted then: the possibility or not to partake of the divine energies. If God is inactive and therefore impartial, He is necessarily a non-existent God, since the human person cannot have any real communion and relationship with Him.

However, today's Gospel Reading, and this is what we must retain, teaches us that only when one draws close to Christ, they can then be united and commune with Him, and it is then that sick human nature can be healed.