

NOVEMBER REFLECTION 2019

Jesus Heals an Invalid at Bethesda

Invocation *(Make the sign of the cross as the leader prays the invocation.)*

Leader: + Lord, open my lips.

All: ***And my mouth shall declare your praise.***

Psalm 103 *(Pray antiphonally.)*

Bless the LORD, my soul;

all my being, bless his holy name!

Bless the LORD, my soul;

and do not forget all his gifts,

Merciful and gracious is the LORD,

slow to anger, abounding in mercy.

He will not always accuse,

and nurses no lasting anger;

He has not dealt with us as our sins merit,

nor requited us as our wrongs deserve.

For as the heavens tower over the earth,

so his mercy towers over those who fear him.

As far as the east is from the west,

so far has he removed our sins from us.

The LORD has set his throne in heaven;

his dominion extends over all.

Bless the LORD, all his creatures,

everywhere in his domain.

Bless the LORD, my soul!

Scripture *After this, there was a feast of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. Now there is in Jerusalem at the Sheep Gate a pool called in Hebrew Bethesda, with five porticoes. In these lay a large number of ill, blind, lame, and crippled. One man was there who had been ill for thirty-eight years. When Jesus saw him lying there and knew that he had been ill for a long time, he said to him, "Do you want to be well?" The sick man answered him, "Sir, I have no one to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up; while I am on my way, someone else gets down there before me." Jesus said to him, "Rise, take up your mat, and walk." Immediately the man became well, took up his mat, and walked.*

Now that day was a sabbath. So the Jews said to the man who was cured, "It is the sabbath, and it is not lawful for you to carry your mat." He answered them, "The man who made me well told me, 'Take up your mat and walk.'" They asked him, "Who is the man who told you, 'Take it up and walk'?" The man who was healed did not know who it was, for Jesus had slipped away, since there was a crowd there. After this Jesus found him in the temple area and said to him, "Look, you are well; do not sin any more, so that nothing worse may happen to you." The man went and told the Jews that Jesus was the one who had made him well.

John 5:1-15

(Pause for a few moments to meditate on the reading before sharing the reflection.)

Reflection *Jesus saw the man, who had been ill for many years, lying at the pool. He knew the longings that were deep in the sick man's heart. He took the initiative and said to him, "Do you want to be made well?" This chronically ill person expected nothing new. There was no one to help him to get first into the water that cured. But God can always surprise us. There is no end to his creative ability. The three commands of Jesus changed his life completely: "Stand up, take your mat and walk." Or, in other words, become active again. But only when spoken by Jesus have these words such force. If we allow Christ to speak these same words to us, we will achieve much.*

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Prayer *Lord Jesus, we have sensed that we are here, like a great multitude lying by the pool of Bethesda, waiting to be healed; trying various ways and means, hoping somebody will help. We have not yet listened to that wonderful voice that says to us in the inner heart, "Rise, take up your bed, and walk." Grant that we will do so from this moment. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.*

Sign of the Cross

