

ctkAlive! Scripture Study
27th Sunday in Ordinary Time
2021—B Cycle



"Palsied Man Let Down Through the Roof"
by [James Tissot](#) (1836-1902).
Found at [Brooklyn Museum](#)

Opening Prayer

(edited and abridged for use here)

Divine Physician

Dear Jesus, divine physician and healer of the sick,
let me turn to you in times time of illness.
Comforter of the troubled,
alleviate my worry and sorrow with your gentle love,
and grant me grace and strength to accept life's burden.

Divine physician, I place my worries in your hands.
I place myself and sick friends and family under your care name(s)
and humbly ask that you restore your servant(s) to health again.
Above all, grant me the grace to accept your will
and to know that whatever you do, you do it out of love.
Amen.

— Found at [Woman's Day](#)

Source book: [Catholic Prayers for All Occasions](#)

and/or

["A Prayer for Healing"](#) by Rev. John Wesley (3.5 min)

Scripture Readings

Genesis 2: 18-24 "It is not good for man to be alone."

Psalms 128: 1-6 "May you see your children's children."

Hebrews 2: 9-11 “(Jesus) is not ashamed to call them ‘brothers.’”

Mark 2: 2-12 “A man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife.”

A Reading from the Book of Genesis (2: 18-24)

“Yahweh God said, ‘It is not good for man to be alone; I will give him a helper who will be like him.’

“Then Yahweh God formed from the earth all the beasts of the field and all the birds of the air and brought them to man to see what he would call them; and whatever man called every living creature, that was its name. So man gave names to all the cattle, the birds of the air, and to every beast of the field. But he did not find among them a helper like himself.

“Then Yahweh God caused a deep sleep to come over man, and he fell asleep. Yahweh took one of his ribs and filled its place with flesh. The rib which Yahweh God had taken from man he formed into a woman and brought her to the man.

“The man then said, ‘Now this is bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh. She shall be called “woman” because she was taken from man.’

“That is why man leaves his father and mother and is attached to his wife, and with her becomes one flesh.”

Personal Reflection

(Spoiler alert: Adam and Eve did not write the Genesis creation story.)

Even now, the more we move forward in life the more interest we have in tracing our genealogies. Where and how did our ancestors live? How did our parents come to know each other? Who influenced us in our early decisions and actions? People of all nations have forever tried to reconstruct their personal, ancestral, and national histories.

The early chapters of Genesis (1-11) gradually formed through several centuries of additions, editing, and rewriting. Genesis took its definitive form in the fifth century BC/BCE, after the former slaves’ return from the Babylonian captivity.

The creation of woman account in this weekend’s liturgy does not claim to describe the historical/scientific emergence of the human race. The former exiles needed a spiritual description of their roots. What amazed the freed exiles—and us still today—is that *every* human being receives from God the right to say we are made in “the image of God.”

It’s not good for a person to be totally alone (as Adam was). We are social beings. Even the introverts among us.

— *If I’ve traced my family origins, what did I learn that I didn’t know before?*

— *Whether I am an introvert or an extrovert, how important is it for me personally to connect daily with other people in a more than casual, accidental way?*

— *Whom do I consider my “best friend”? What need within me does my “bestie” fill? And I in that person’s life?*

Responsorial Psalm 128 (1-6)

The blessings of home: a pilgrimage song

May the Lord bless us all the days of our lives.

Blessed are you who fear Yahweh
and walk in his ways.
You will eat the fruit of your toil;
you will be blessed and favored.
May the Lord bless us all the days of our lives.

Your wife, like a vine,
will bear fruits in your home;
your children, like olive shoots,
will stand around your table.
May the Lord bless us all the days of our lives.

Such are the blessings bestowed
upon the man who fears Yahweh.
May Yahweh praise you from Zion.
May the Lord bless us all the days of our lives.

May you see Jerusalem prosperous
all the days of your life.
May you see your children's children
and Israel at peace!
May the Lord bless us all the days of our lives.

Personal Reflection

Like the Book of Genesis, Psalm 128 dates from the post-exilic period (after 520 BC/BCE). It continues Psalm 127, in which we hear, "(Children) are a gift from Yahweh; the fruit of the womb is a reward. Like arrows in the hands of a warrior are the (children) of one's youth."

Psalm 128 further develops the family theme. It asks Yahweh for the blessing of God-centered, happy homes. Men and women each have their part in building joy-filled homes. So, today we pray for happiness and peace in our homes and family relationships.

"Blessed are you who fear Yahweh and walk in his ways."

— *What does it mean to me to "fear God"?*

— *How do I "walk in his ways?" (be specific) What am I not doing that would help me walk that path even straighter and farther?*

A Reading from the Letter to the Hebrews (2: 9-11)

“Jesus, who suffered death, and for a little while, was placed lower than the angels, has been crowned with honor and glory. For the merciful plan of God demanded that he experience death, on behalf of everyone.

“God, from whom all come, and by whom all things exist, wanted to bring many children to glory, and he thought it fitting to make perfect, through suffering, the initiator of their salvation. So, he who gives, and those who receive holiness, are one. He, himself, is not ashamed to call us brothers and sisters.”

Personal Reflection

First century Jews living in Palestine bore the title, “Hebrews.” By then, a majority of Jews had emigrated to other countries throughout the Roman Empire. This letter addresses those first Christian communities in Palestine formed mostly by Jews and for Jews. In many cases, their conversion to Christ resulted in persecution, as happened to Jesus. Persecution led most of them into poverty. Still, they encouraged one another with the assurance that they would reach their ultimate home in Afterlife. Remember that St. Paul took up a collection from among his widespread communities to send to the poor in Jerusalem.

For a long time, Christians thought Paul had authored Hebrews, but the language and style bears no resemblance to his writings. The letter’s unknown author reaffirms the divinity of Christ, but equally cites texts from the Hebrew Scriptures (OT), which speak of “man” (“son of man” is the Hebrew term) and applies them to the Messiah Christ. The Risen Christ gave assurance—though as yet unseen—that all his faithful would share eternity with him. The letter assures believers who live in that Spirit that they will share eternal life, though their current suffering may cloud their vision.

“... make perfect, through suffering ...”

— *What keeps me faithful to Christ, when I look around and see so much evil and suffering in the world today—and at times in myself?*

Proclamation from the Gospel according to Mark (2: 2-12)

“After some days, Jesus returned to Capernaum. As the news spread that he was in the house, so many people gathered, that there was no longer room even outside the door.

“While Jesus was preaching the word to them, some people had brought to him a paralyzed man. The four men who carried him couldn’t get near Jesus because of the crowd, so they removed the covering above the roof where Jesus sat and lowered the man on his mat through the hole.

“When Jesus saw the faith of these people, he said to the paralytic, ‘My son, your sins are forgiven.

“It happened that some teachers of the law were sitting there. They wondered within themselves, ‘How can he speak like this, insulting God? Who can forgive sins except God?’

“At once, Jesus knew in his spirit what they were thinking, and asked, ‘Why do you wonder? Is it easier to say to this paralyzed man, Your sins are forgiven, or to say, rise, take up your mat and walk? But now you shall know that the Son of Man has authority

on earth to forgive sins.' He said to the paralytic, 'Stand up, take up your mat and go home.'

"The man rose and, in the sight of all those people, he took up his mat and went out. All of them were astonished and praised God, saying, 'Never have we seen anything like this!'"

Personal Reflection

In this miracle story about the paralytic being both *cured* and *forgiven*, Jesus addresses: (1) the sick man, (2) his loyal friends, and (3) the "teachers of the law." When Jesus saw the faith of the paralytic's friends, he rewarded that faith. Apparently the paralytic himself did nothing more than consent to his friends' unusual plan. Yet, at once, Jesus told him—"Your sins are forgiven." Then, he noticed the doubts of the "teachers of the law"

Many texts of the Old Testament emphasize the complex connection between sin and illness. The Jews of Jesus' time considered physical ailments punishment from God. Certainly during the paralytic's long infirmity, he must have asked himself why God saw fit to punish him. How can Jesus now forgive sins without, even, a specific request and confession from the paralytic himself?

"When Jesus saw the faith of these people, he said to the paralytic, 'My son, your sins are forgiven.'" What a strange thing to say! Yet, we commonly say, "I must have done *something* terribly wrong to deserve ____(*whatever our problem is*)____."

— *When was the last time I said to God or someone else, "What did I do to deserve this?" What was happening in my life at that time? How did I answer my own question?*

— *How deep is my conviction that my own failings are often the cause of whatever is going wrong in my life? How can I find a better/different way to look at my suffering and that of others?*

For Inspirational Viewing/Listening

Video

[Bishop Robert Barron](#) lays open the first sentence of [Mark's Gospel and the Victory of God](#) (9.5 min)

Music:

[Christopher Duffley](#), an autistic and blind 10 year-old [now 20 yrs. old] sings "[I Want to See You, Lord](#)." His voice and soul shocked the audience. (6 min.)

The Week Ahead

Journaling Prompts

Based on this weekend's Scripture readings, what does the Risen Christ ask me to do TODAY regarding . . .

(1) the quality of the love I bring to my personal relationships . . . and

(2) my life as an emissary of Christ, committed to bringing God's love to the people

with whom I interact in person and on social media?

Who this week needs to hear from me some expression of love?

Who needs to receive from me a moment of laughter and personal concern? Why do I hesitate?

In light of this weekend's Scriptures, take some time to write about events occurring in your life this week and what you see happening in the world.

Preview of Next Week's Scriptures

28th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Wisdom 7: 7-11 "I prayed and prudence was given to me."

Psalms 90: "Fill us at daybreak with your kindness."

Hebrews 4: 12-13 "The word of God is living and effective."

Mark 10: 17-30 "'Good teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?'"

Closing Prayer

(edited for use here)

Prayer of Healing for Friends

Lord, your Word speaks promises of healing and restoration.

I thank you for the miracles you still perform.

Today, I claim your promises for my friend(s) and loved ones, (name(s)).

I believe in the healing power of faith and prayer,

and I ask you to begin your mighty work

in the life of my friends and family.

Please surround them with supernatural peace
and strength and give them the faith to believe
that all things are possible for you.

Protect them from discouragement
and let your miraculous healing begin.

Amen.

Source: [Crosswalk](#)

Questions?

Send any questions or comments you might have to algarrotto@comcast.net

Gender usage in writing: We are conscious of gender references to God in the Scripture texts. Often, attempts to rewrite these passages result in awkward sentence structures. We have left the biblical translations as they are but do our best to be inclusive in all other parts of the reflection.

The Sunday readings are from [Christian Community Bible: Catholic Pastoral Edition](#)

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Coming VERY soon!! *Inspector Javert: at the Gates of Hell*
(a novel exploring “what happens *next?*” after death)