

Jesus the Healer

Grace: *Ask for the grace to better know and understand Jesus so that your love for Jesus will grow and your desire to imitate him will increase.*

Introduction:

There are many examples of Jesus healing and you are free to pick one that you might be already familiar with and to pray with it. Some suggestions include: the cripple lowered through roof (Luke 5:17-26), the Centurion's servant (Luke 7:1-10), the ten lepers (Luke 17:11-19), the hemorrhaging woman (Mark 5:21-43), the man born blind (John 9:1-11), or Lazarus raised from the dead (John 11:1-44).

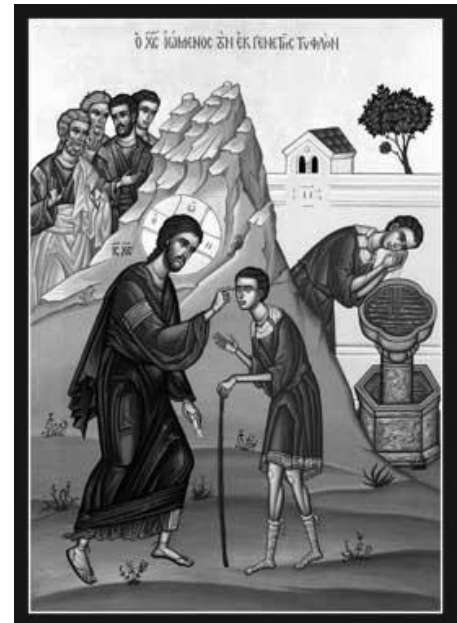
You may contemplate this passage from multiple perspectives. For example, you may imagine yourself as the person being healed, a friend or family member of the person being healed, or one of Jesus' disciples. Allow yourself to play with different roles and see which one seems to attract your attention and spark your contemplative imagination.

Identify the role which produces the strongest feelings and the most vivid imagery. Use that role for your reflection. This exercise gives you a chance to witness and experience the impact that the healing presence of Jesus can have on your life and the lives of others.

What is it like to be around Jesus and to watch him heal people? Who do you know that is in need of healing? In the example of the man being lowered through the roof one might wonder about what motivates the friends to take such drastic action? What was Jesus talking about before this unexpected interruption? How does Jesus respond to the interruption? What motivates Jesus to heal the man? How do you respond to Jesus' power? What do you say to Jesus? To whom and how do you explain what happened?

To make the reflection more personal, consider in what ways might you be crippled and need healing? What keeps you from helping others reach Jesus? What can you learn from the way that Jesus deals with unexpected events? In what ways does Jesus bring healing to your life? In what ways does Jesus encourage you to get up and walk? What holds you down? Who are your friends that would take you to Jesus to be healed? Who are the people in your life that keep you from Jesus?

Ask the Holy Spirit to guide your imagination as you talk with Jesus about His healing ministry. What is Jesus trying to reveal or teach you about His way of dealing with those who need healing? How might you be called to imitate Jesus and bring healing to those around you? Perhaps you will experience the unexpected. Perhaps you too will see remarkable things today and perhaps, just maybe, you too may be healed!



Reminders:

Remember the frame of prayer: In God's presence; recall this is sacred history; think about where I am; ask for what I want: I want to know Jesus intimately, friend to friend; enter in the event; end with an Our Father.

The Examen each day helps you keep mindful of the Exercises that you've committed yourself to. More importantly, the action gives you a few minutes to remember how it stands between you and God.

Luke 5:17-26 Jesus Heals a Paralytic - One day as he was teaching, Pharisees and teachers of the law, who had come from every village of Galilee and from Judea and Jerusalem, were sitting there. And the power of the Lord was present for him to heal the sick. Some men came carrying a paralytic on a mat and tried to take him into the house to lay him before Jesus. When they could not find a way to do this because of the crowd, they went up on the roof and lowered him on his mat through the tiles into the middle of the crowd, right in front of Jesus. When Jesus saw their faith, he said, "Friend, your sins are forgiven." The Pharisees and the teachers of the law began thinking to themselves, "Who is this fellow who speaks blasphemy? Who can forgive sins but God alone?" Jesus knew what they were thinking and asked, "Why are you thinking these things in your hearts? Which is easier: to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up and walk'? But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins...." He said to the paralyzed man, "I tell you, get up, take your mat and go home." Immediately he stood up in front of them, took what he had been lying on and went home praising God. Everyone was amazed and gave praise to God. They were filled with awe and said, "We have seen remarkable things today."

Luke 17:11-19 Ten Healed of Leprosy - Now on his way to Jerusalem, Jesus traveled along the border between Samaria and Galilee. As he was going into a village, ten men who had leprosy met him. They stood at a distance and called out in a loud voice, "Jesus, Master, have pity on us!" When he saw them, he said, "Go, show yourselves to the priests." And as they went, they were cleansed. One of them, when he saw he was healed, came back, praising God in a loud voice. He threw himself at Jesus' feet and thanked him—and he was a Samaritan. Jesus asked, "Were not all ten cleansed? Where are the other nine? Was no one found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?" Then he said to him, "Rise and go; your faith has made you well."



Mark 5:21-43

A Dead Girl and a Sick Woman

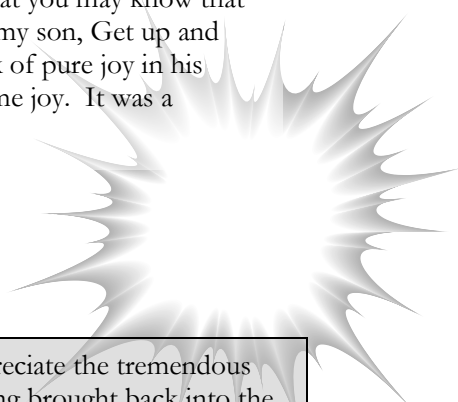
When Jesus had again crossed over by boat to the other side of the lake, a large crowd gathered around him while he was by the lake. Then one of the synagogue rulers, named Jairus, came there. Seeing Jesus, he fell at his feet and pleaded earnestly with him, "My little daughter is dying. Please come and put your hands on her so that she will be healed and live." So Jesus went with him. A large crowd followed and pressed around him. And a woman was there who had been subject to bleeding for twelve years. She had suffered a great deal under the care of many doctors and had spent all she had, yet instead of getting better she grew worse. When she heard about Jesus, she came up behind him in the crowd and touched his cloak, because she thought, "If I just touch his clothes, I will be healed." Immediately her bleeding stopped and she felt in her body that she was freed from her suffering. At once Jesus realized that power had gone out from him. He turned around in the crowd and asked, "Who touched my clothes?" "You see the people crowding against you," his disciples answered, "and yet you can ask, 'Who touched me?'" But Jesus kept looking around to see who had done it. Then the woman, knowing what had happened to her, came and fell at his feet and, trembling with fear, told him the whole truth. He said to her, "Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace and be freed from your suffering." While Jesus was still speaking, some men came from the house of Jairus, the synagogue ruler. "Your daughter is dead," they said. "Why bother the teacher any more?" Ignoring what they said, Jesus told the synagogue ruler, "Don't be afraid; just believe." He did not let anyone follow him except Peter, James and John the brother of James. When they came to the home of the synagogue ruler, Jesus saw a commotion, with people crying and wailing loudly. He went in and said to them, "Why all this commotion and wailing? The child is not dead but asleep." But they laughed at him. After he put them all out, he took the child's father and mother and the disciples who were with him, and went in where the child was. He took her by the hand and said to her, "Talitha koum!" (which means, "Little girl, I say to you, get up!"). Immediately the girl stood up and walked around (she was twelve years old). At this they were completely astonished. He gave strict orders not to let anyone know about this, and told them to give her something to eat.

Luke 7:1-10 The Faith of the Centurion - When Jesus had finished saying all this in the hearing of the people, he entered Capernaum. There a centurion's servant, whom his master valued highly, was sick and about to die. The centurion heard of Jesus and sent some elders of the Jews to him, asking him to come and heal his servant. When they came to Jesus, they pleaded earnestly with him, "This man deserves to have you do this, because he loves our nation and has built our synagogue." So Jesus went with them. He was not far from the house when the centurion sent friends to say to him: "Lord, don't trouble yourself, for I do not deserve to have you come under my roof. That is why I did not even consider myself worthy to come to you. But say the word, and my servant will be healed. For I myself am a man under authority, with soldiers under me. I tell this one, 'Go,' and he goes; and that one, 'Come,' and he comes. I say to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it." When Jesus heard this, he was amazed at him, and turning to the crowd following him, he said, "I tell you, I have not found such great faith even in Israel." Then the men who had been sent returned to the house and found the servant well.



In these or similar words ... It was turning dark and we were running out of time. So we hurried. This could be the one in a lifetime chance for us to really help our friend John. Jesus was in town and was teaching in this very neighborhood. So we hurried. Amongst us, we were caring John on his mat to take him to Jesus. We have all heard of him healing the sick and curing the injured so maybe he could do the same for our friend. The sky was turning an awesome shade of purple and pink as the sun began to set in the west and the night air became noticeably colder. But none of us noticed it except for the fact that we might be too late and Jesus might be done teaching already. So we ran on. I look across the mat with John to my friend and I see he is just as anxious and curious as I am. As I look at each one of their faces, I see a look of determination mixed with curiosity and hope. I mean John could actually be healed today! I was feeling extreme happiness at this thought and at the prospect of meeting a man who can do some truly amazing thing. There! I can see the light in the home ahead of us! We're almost there! Involuntarily we all speed up. Mist emits from our mouths every time we exhale now. Darkness has descended upon the village. And we speed along into the heart of night getting ever closer to that bright light of hope. Inside me I feel like a mosquito drawn to a lamp. I find it impossible to think of anything else to do than reach that light. Smiles are now distinct on my friends and my faces. There is a feeling of incredible and unsuppressed joy now on my face. And we run even harder into that light of hope. The joy in my chest is huge now, like a furnace inside my heart warming a beyond freezing body. It feels so good, it makes it hard to breath and I love it. We are actually going to see Jesus and heal John! John is going to be healed! I just can't get around it. My friend will finally be free of his paralysis. He can and will walk and move around like the rest of us! I look down at him and I see he has a smile on as big as mine. It cuts his face in half. I can sense his hope and joy inside of him is as big or most likely bigger than my own. And I feel even more joy at his happiness. There's no way Jesus can fail now, I know it. As I look up from John's face, the large smiles cutting faces in half are on everyone's faces. This is going to work! With this huge growing in faith, I also sense something else. As if someone is watching us and knowing our feelings and is overjoyed at our faith and understands completely from where it comes. Like God is especially watching us right now and is smiling down at us...

...We're here. And a good portion of happiness is stolen from everyone's hearts. The house is full. There is a huge throng of people crowding around it and there is no way we can bring John inside to see Jesus. Sadly, we put the mat down and I see John the saddest he has ever been. With a renewed sense of determination to help my friend, we all start talking about how to best get inside the home where Jesus most certainly is. "There has to be a way," I said. "We can't just give up hope yet. We can't just give up on John." With that I look to him and he is watching us with sadness and thankfulness. I think he is thankful for us even trying to help him. He is sad because he has the first sign of real hope for him and it was just taken away. And inside, he must be wishing we never gave him false hope. "There still might be a way" Mark said. "Look". At that he points to the ceiling and a way to climb up. That's it! Brilliant! I look down at John and exclaim "John there's hope for you yet!" I laugh. We all laugh including John. The sense of joy and approval that came out of nowhere on all of us fueled it as we all worked to get on the roof. It was exactly like the feeling from before but so much larger. Like take that original feeling of extreme hope, joy, and approval and multiply it by a hundred and you get a fifth of what we just felt and are feeling now. So with large smiles and laughing all the way, we work to climb up the roof with John. When we get up there, we remove sections of roofing large enough to fit the mat in and tie ropes to John's mat to lower him in. As we do so, we hear Jesus preaching and teaching to the people inside but it is barely coherent in my mind as all I am thinking about is helping John and my exuberant joy blocks out all other thought. Finally we lower the mat down till John was lying right in front of Jesus. All becomes quiet as Jesus stops talking and looks at John. The people inside look at him and up at us with incredulous stares and anger on their faces. Jesus however looks up at us and smiles and a look in his eyes that show understanding and love. At that moment, I feel just that toward Jesus. As if he was the source of understanding and compassion from earlier. I – we all look back at him in the eyes and smile, hope and happiness clearly evident on our faces. Jesus nods and looks back at us. All of our concentration is on Jesus and John that we don't notice the others at all. "Friend your sins are forgiven" Jesus utters to John and John looks back with tears in his eyes silently thanking Jesus and then looks back at us silently thanking us as well for even thinking of him when we heard of Jesus being in town and taking him here past so many obstacles just to help him. His extreme gratitude is clear on his face and in his eyes and at that moment I feel SO HAPPY for my friend John. As in the happiest I've ever felt for anybody and I silently thank Jesus with all my heart. Then Jesus spoke all of a sudden. "Why are you thinking these things in your hearts? For which is easier to say, 'your sins are forgiven', or 'Get up and walk'? But that you may know that the Son of Man has the authority to forgive sins, I say to you, John, my son, Get up and walk." Then John did just that. He got up and walked with the look of pure joy in his heart and face and we all, friends of John and now Jesus, felt this same joy. It was a MIRACLE!!! Praise Jesus!



Practicing What Your Preach ... To better understand and appreciate the tremendous gift that Jesus offers through healing those who are in need of being brought back into the community, visit someone in the hospital or a nursing home. Be aware of the healing power that your presence offers. If you or a family member is in need of healing, the Sacrament of Anointing, can be a powerful way to experience Jesus' healing touch and to allow your community of faith to pray with you during your distress.