

Isaiah 43: 18-19, 21-22, 24b-25
2Corinthians 1: 18-22,
Mark 2: 1-12

FOCUS: God's love for us is great indeed!

Remember not the events of the past-your sins I remember no more. These are some pretty powerful words. Only God forgives our sins and wipes away our tears. Through the words of Isaiah, God reminded the Chosen People of their past failures to rely on God, and for these transgressions they had lost their freedom; they were sent into exile. The people had turned to false gods and succumbed to worldliness. They had sinned, but God was now offering them forgiveness and an end to their exile. God was always faithful even when they were unfaithful.

Paul tells the Corinthians that God's faithfulness is with us in Jesus Christ; that God has put his seal upon us and given us the Spirit in our hearts as an installment of that faithfulness. When God created us we were given the spiritual gifts of intellect and free will. With our intellect we can reason, extent-we can envision our futures and make provisions for them.. With the gift of free will we can pick and choose how we want to live; we can decide what to do-or not do-whenver a decision must be made. God gave us these gifts out of sheer goodness so that we could enjoy them forever in his own eternal kingdom. The means God used to raise us from the status of creatures and make us capable of sharing his kingdom was the Incarnation. God's Son was to share our human nature with us, and, in turn, we would be sharers with him of his divine nature. Paul reminds us that all the promises of the Father find their yes, their fulfillment in Jesus.

In today's Gospel we hear of the paralytic who was lowered through the roof in order to be in the presence of Jesus. Those who brought him to Jesus believed that he would be cured, but no one was expecting to hear Jesus say, "your sins are forgiven." This was considered blasphemy. Everyone knew that only God could forgive sins. In order to show them that he had divine power, Jesus commanded the paralytic to get up and walk out of the house. While many were astounded and praised God, some of those who were present probably made the decision not to believe what they had seen and heard. In doing so, they made the decision to help to destroy this carpenter from Nazareth whom they felt had made himself the Son of God. Like most of those who were in the crowd that day in Capernaum, we, too, are amazed at the love God has shows us and the fatherly interest he has in our eternal welfare. How do we respond with our own intellect and free will? Do we imitate the crowd in today's Gospel by glorifying God and his divine Son, who has made us his brothers and sisters?

How many times and in what ways have we been guilty of turning away from God; from relying on other people and /or things of the world to guide us rather than depending on God" When things are going well, it is not too difficult to go about our daily routines without ever once thinking of turning

to our heavenly Father. The horrific result of terrorist attacks and all acts of violence in so many parts of the world are a real wake-up call that something is terribly amiss in the world.

We are challenged today to use God's gifts of intellect and free will to make this world better and to prepare for our own entrance into the heavenly kingdom where all the faithful will be united as one family, one people living in the glory of God. We are challenged to conduct our lives with the understanding that we truly are one people "under God" and that we need to turn to God for guidance, strength, and spiritual nourishment. May the words of the prophet Isaiah, "Remember not the events of past-your sins I remember no more," give us comfort as they did those in exile so long ago. May we, too, be resolved to place our trust in God's love for humankind.

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MCCW First Friday Program for March:

"The Family and Christian Values: Raising Catholic Children."

Join us on Thursday, 6 March, starting at 7 PM. We will begin with Mass, followed by food, fellowship, and our presentation from Deacon Tony Ferraiuolo. Deacon Ferraiuolo is from the Archdiocese of New York, and works as the Director of the Class Support Program at the Association of Graduates. He will speak from the perspective of both a member of the clergy and as a parent. See you there!

New Bible Study Session begins Tuesday 18 Feb 03

All are invited to join us for study on ***Prayer and Spiritual Life***. We will meet twice per month for a total of 8 sessions. Child care will be provided. Hope to see you there!!

Meeting Location: Main Post Chapel - Activities Room

Child Care: Certified caregivers will provide free child care in the post chapel nursery from 9:00 to 11:00 am.

Meeting Time: The Study will begin promptly at 9:15 and end at 10:45.

which will attach us to God alone so that our every thought, word and deed may tend to His greater glory. / Obtain for us also a spirit of prayer and self-denial that we may recover by penance what we have lost by sin and at length attain to that blessed abode where you are the Queen of angels and of men. Amen

Jesus, we humbly ask you to glorify in heaven and on earth, the servant of God, Mother Teresa of Calcutta, who generously participated in Your sufferings, who loved Thee so much and labored for the glory of your heavenly Father and for the good of souls.

With confidence, we beseech thee to grant us, through her intercession the grace of ... (Healing of Michael Kwinn III) which we ardently desire.

Pray: *Glory be to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit. Amen (3 times)*

Format borrowed from Prayer for Intercession of Padre

