



74th Year

July 12, 2026

Pamphlet #28 (3815)

THE SUNDAY GOSPEL (Matthew 9:1-8)

"Child, your sins are forgiven."

At that time, getting into a boat Jesus crossed over and came to his own city. And behold, they brought to him a paralytic, lying on his bed; and when Jesus saw their faith he said to the paralytic, "Take heart, my son; your sins are forgiven." And behold, some of the scribes said to themselves, "This man is blaspheming." But Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said, "Why do you think evil in your hearts? For which is easier, to say 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say 'Rise and walk?' But that you may know that the Son of man has authority on earth to forgive sins" he then said to the paralytic – "Rise, take up your bed and go home." And he rose and went home. When the crowds saw it, they were afraid, and they glorified God, who had given such authority to men.

RESTORATION OF THE RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD

The Evangelist Matthew vividly describes for us the healing of the paralytic of Capernaum. After the Lord returned from the region of the Gergesenes to the aforementioned city, some people brought Him a paralytic who was confined to his bed so that He might heal him. Christ saw the deep faith both of the sick man himself and of those who carried him, and He said to the paralytic some words that may seem strange, if we do not look into their deeper meaning: "Take courage, child; your sins are forgiven." Whereas one might have expected the Lord to restore this man's health, He forgives his sins.

What is sin?

Sin should not be understood simply as the violation of certain moral rules or legal regulations. Above all, sin means turning away from God, expelling Him from one's life, and putting oneself or other "gods" in His place – idols such as greed, injustice, and the pursuit of pleasure. When a person distances himself from God, however, he distances himself from life, truth, light, and joy, and thus condemns himself to the darkness of sin. For this reason, the forgiveness of sins, granted by the compassionate Father to the person who repents of his failures, mistakes, and transgressions, is one of God's greatest gifts, a powerful proof of His love and boundless mercy.

A communion of love and compassion

Therefore, the words Christ addressed to the paralytic are of great significance. First of all, He calls the sick man "child." Christ never ceases to regard us as His children and to ask that we feel Him as Father, brother, and friend, whatever our condition may be, no matter how low we may have fallen. For He always offers us Himself, a helping hand of closeness that enables us to rise again, to continue our spiritual struggle, cast off despair, and seek the restoration of our relationship with Him. Then He says to him, "Take courage;" have courage and do not be afraid, for I am with you. Courage means relying on the power of God's infinite love and discovering the gift of divine adoption that we were granted through our Baptism and our participation in the life of the Church. This is the highest degree of spiritual kinship, whereby a person becomes a living cell of the Body of Christ ("of the same Body and the same Blood"). For this reason, Saint Anthony the Great proclaimed: "Let us therefore be courageous and always rejoice, as those who are being saved; and let us consider in our souls that the Lord is with us." And finally, the Lord says to the paralytic: "Your sins are forgiven." The forgiveness of sins contributes first and foremost to preparing man's heart to receive Christ. In a heart dominated by egotism, the lack of love, and selfishness, how can Christ find room to dwell, and how can one's fellow man find room there as well?

The power of faith

Some of the scribes who were present, in their narrow-mindedness, questioned Christ's authority to forgive sins. And then He who, out of love, forgave the paralytic's sins also proceeds to heal his body. By His divine power, He restores him to health. It is a miracle that surpasses man's ability to comprehend and explain, a miracle accomplished through the presence, energy, and word of the Lord, together with the cooperation of the person's faith.

In our own day also, and in every age, Christ does not cease to perform healings in the souls and bodies of people. When the sick person entrusts himself to God with confidence, prayer, and love, he finds peace and receives the strength to endure pain and to face medical treatments and the other challenges of illness with courage and perseverance.

The thought that the Lord Himself endured the torture of the Cross, and that many Saints of our Church suffered from serious illnesses without ever ceasing to glorify the Name of God, gives all of us the opportunity to view our illnesses, temptations, and afflictions from a different perspective.

Archimandrite N. K.

July 12, 2026: 6th Sunday of Matthew

Proclus and Hilarius, Martyrs (2nd c.);
Saint Paisios the Clairvoyant († 1994).

Pl. 1st Tone – Eothinon: 6 – Epistle: Romans 12:6-14
– Gospel: Matthew 9:1-8

NEXT SUNDAY: July 19, The Fathers of the 4th Ecumenical Council
Epistle: Titus 3:8-15 – Gospel: Matthew 5:14-19

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VOICE OF THE LORD, a weekly pamphlet of Orthodox faith and life of the "Apostolic Ministry of the Church of Greece". Iasiou 1, 115 21 Athens. Publisher – Director: Metropolitan of Phanariou, Agathangelos. Editorial office, tel. 210.7272.331. Processing, tel. 210.7272.388. Through the holy churches, it is distributed free of charge. From the Printing Office of the Apostolic Ministry.

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