

## Thursday 2 July

Today is Thursday the 2 July, in the thirteenth week of Ordinary Time.

What burdens are you carrying today? Can you place all this in the hands of the Lord, and relax into his loving presence?

Today's reading is from the Gospel of Matthew.

Matthew 9:1-8

After getting into a boat, Jesus crossed the sea and came to his own town.

And just then some people were carrying a paralyzed man lying on a bed. When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "Take heart, son; your sins are forgiven." Then some of the scribes said to themselves, "This man is blaspheming." But Jesus, perceiving their thoughts, said, "Why do you think evil in your hearts?"

For which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Stand up and walk'? But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins" —he then said to the paralytic—"Stand up, take your bed and go to your home."

And he stood up and went to his home. When the crowds saw it, they were filled with awe, and they glorified God, who had given such authority to human beings.

Feeling un-forgiven can be like paralysis. When things can't be put right I feel trapped, unable to move on. The future is closed. I can't grow or walk free. Do I feel like that, or can I remember a time when I did?

In today's Gospel, Jesus relieves a man of the burden of the past with simple but powerful words: 'Take heart, son; your sins are forgiven'. Do I still carry the weight of past mistakes and sin? Are there parts of my life that weigh me down? - things I am even scared to call "sin"?

As you hear the story one more time, imagine yourself lying on that bed, unable to move, trapped in your past. Hear Jesus utter words of forgiveness with a gentle voice. And let him show his power to forgive by saying "stand up and walk".

The gift of true forgiveness is always a doorway into deeper love. Maybe you want to express



something of that now to the Lord? Or just stay in silence, with Jesus standing in front of you, looking on you with great love and tenderness.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.