

January 13 Friday

Reading 1HEB 4:1-5, 11

Let us be on our guard while the promise of entering into his rest remains, that none of you seem to have failed. For in fact we have received the Good News just as our ancestors did. But the word that they heard did not profit them, for they were not united in faith with those who listened. For we who believed enter into that rest, just as he has said: *As I swore in my wrath, "They shall not enter into my rest,"* and yet his works were accomplished at the foundation of the world. For he has spoken somewhere about the seventh day in this manner, *And God rested on the seventh day from all his works;* and again, in the previously mentioned place, *They shall not enter into my rest.* Therefore, let us strive to enter into that rest, so that no one may fall after the same example of disobedience.

Responsorial Psalm PS 78:3 AND 4BC, 6C-7, 8

R. Do not forget the works of the Lord!

What we have heard and know,
and what our fathers have declared to us,
we will declare to the generation to come
The glorious deeds of the LORD and his strength.

R. Do not forget the works of the Lord!

That they too may rise and declare to their sons
that they should put their hope in God,
And not forget the deeds of God
but keep his commands.

R. Do not forget the works of the Lord!

And not be like their fathers,
a generation wayward and rebellious,
A generation that kept not its heart steadfast
nor its spirit faithful toward God.

R. Do not forget the works of the Lord!

Alleluia LK 7:16

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

A great prophet has arisen in our midst
and God has visited his people.

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

Gospel MK 2:1-12

When Jesus returned to Capernaum after some days, it became known that he was at home. Many gathered together so that there was no longer room for them, not even around the door, and he preached the word to them. They came bringing to him a paralytic carried by four men. Unable to get near Jesus because of the crowd, they opened up the roof above him. After they had broken through, they let down the mat on which the paralytic was lying. When Jesus saw their faith, he said to him, "Child, your sins are forgiven." Now some of the scribes were sitting there asking themselves, "Why does this man speak that way? He is blaspheming. Who but God alone can forgive sins?" Jesus immediately knew in his mind what they were thinking to themselves, so he said, "Why are you thinking such things in your hearts? Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Rise, pick up your mat and walk'? But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority to forgive sins on earth" –he said to the paralytic, "I say to you, rise, pick up your mat, and go home." He rose, picked up his mat at once, and went away in the sight of everyone. They were all astounded and glorified God, saying, "We have never seen anything like this."

Reflection:

The paralytic person is first forgiven his sins and then is healed as a reward of the persisting faith of the community who brought him wading through all the obstacles. The community takes up the responsibility to bring back the strayed and ailing sheep! Despite the accusations, Jesus grants what he and the believing community wanted. The significance of the role and responsibility of the family, the community and the church to bring a person to wholeness is prominent here. The greatest consolation and assurance that a sinner can be given is, son and daughter, your sins are forgiven. The temptation of the present day is to seclude "the useless," "the complicated" and "the problematic." Their wholeness and salvation depend on the generous, faith-filled persons who can carry to Jesus. Jesus emphasizes that "the faith of the community is instrumental for the forgiveness of the sinner, the return of the strayed and the healing of the suffering."