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Before I know it, Jesus is setting up a challenge: what's easier to do? Tell somebody that their sins are forgiven or to actually heal somebody? Next thing you know, Jesus tells the paralytic to stand up, to take his mat with him and to go home.

And by God, the man does stand up: he takes his mat and he goes home.

People are stunned and initially speechless. However, after a few minutes people in the crowd begin to talk openly about what they have just witnessed. As the crowd disperses, some folks are almost running as they return home to tell their friends and neighbors about what Jesus did for this man. For their part, some of the lawyers who were there seem to have simply vanished.

4. Affections

What does it take to forgive sins? Does Jesus really – and truly – forgive me? What does it take for me to really – and truly – forgive others? Beyond forgiving people, how far am I willing to go to actually heal or help people, be it in great ways...or small?

5. Resolution

In what areas of my life do I need to ask for forgiveness today? In what ways might I be asked to grant forgiveness today? In what ways do I share in Jesus' power to heal? How can I share that with others?

6. TOP-Off (*Thanksgiving / Offering / Petition*)

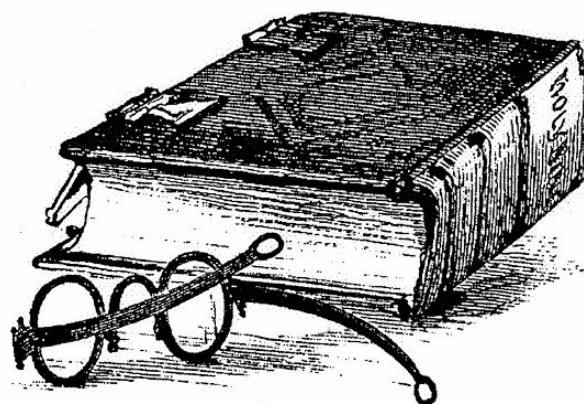
- a. Give thanksgiving to God for this experience of calm.
- b. Offer to God your resolution of
- c. Ask God to give you the grace to accomplish this.

7. Spiritual Bouquet

Think of a phrase, word, or image that you can take with you throughout this day which will help you to stay focused on this experience and your resolution.

PRAYER OF THE HEART

A SALESIAN METHOD FOR MEDITATING



Jesus Heals the Paralytic

Matthew 9: 1 - 8

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MEDITATION: A SALESIAN METHOD

1. Remote Preparation

- a. Tranquility of spirit/center yourself
- b. Scripture reading

2. Immediate Preparation

- a. Remind yourself of God's presence
- b. Ask for God's inspiration

3. Considerations

- a. Take an incident in Jesus' life
- b. Use your imagination
- c. Place yourself in the scene (*Recreate the moment*)
- d. Follow the Spirit's lead
- e. Act like the bee (*Get as much nectar as possible*)

4. Affections

- a. Devout movements of the mind
- b. Devout movements of the heart

5. Resolution

- a. Be specific
- b. Must be do-able (*Is it practical, concrete, measurable?*)
- c. Practice a self-check (*Did you do what you resolved to do?*)

6. Top - Off

- a. Thanksgiving
- b. Offering
- c. Petition (*Ask God to see you through the day*)

7. Spiritual Bouquet

- a. Take a phrase or thought upon which to meditate
- b. Make the whole day an extension of prayer
- c. Integrate the experience of prayer and daily life

1. Remote Preparation

- a. Tranquility of Spirit/center yourself (*Relaxation techniques*)
- b. Read passage from Matthew 9: 1 - 8

Jesus stepped into a boat, crossed over and came to his own town. Some people approached him with a paralytic lying on a mat. When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "Take heart, son; your sins are forgiven."

At this point, some of the teachers of the law said to themselves, "This fellow is blaspheming!"

"Aware of the thoughts they were harboring, Jesus said, "Why do entertain such evil thoughts in your hearts? Which is easier: to say 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up and walk?' So that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins..." Then, he said to the paralytic, "Get up, take your mat and go home." The man got up and went home. When the crowd saw this, they were filled with awe; and they praised God, who had given such authority to men.

2. Immediate Preparation

- a. Ask for a deeper awareness of God's Presence
- b. Ask for God's inspiration

3. Considerations

A group of people bring a paralyzed man to Jesus on a mat, asking Jesus to heal him. Jesus' first response is to tell the paralyzed man to 'take heart,' to take courage. He then tells the man (in front of all of these people) that his sins are forgiven: probably not the miracle that the paralytic (and his friends) were hoping for.

Suddenly, Jesus is questioning the crowd about their reaction to what they have just witnessed, that is, telling this man that his sins are forgiven. Jesus seems incensed about something

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