

Lent Reflection 16th March 2021

John 5:1 - 3, 5 – 16. Ezekiel 47:1 -9,12 and Psalm 46: 1 – 8.

The lame man beside the pool was unable to reach the pool when the water was stirred because he had no one to help him, yet for 38 years he had come to the pool. He believed that if he could reach the stirred water he would be cured.

When Jesus saw him and learned of his condition He said 'Get up pick up your mat and walk.' At once the man was physically cured.

The man did not have to enter the water, Jesus healed him. Why you may ask then the reference to the pool and the water in this reading and the reading from Ezekiel and in the Psalm? When we enter into faith we are blessed or baptised with water to signify cleansing, a new beginning or new life just as Jesus did when He was baptised in the Jordan. But this man was not touched by water, he was cured by Jesus – get up and walk. Later in the reading in verse 14 Jesus found the man in the Temple and told him to stop sinning; this is both physical and spiritual healing.

God's forgiveness of sin is the greatest gift we will ever receive and one we must always be aware of in our earthly life. At this time of Lent, we should reflect on this forgiveness as Jesus suffered death and rose again for us all, for the forgiveness of our sins and the promise of eternal life.

Do not make up petty rules about working on the sabbath like the Pharisees in the reading did, God's word is quite clear on this point. He rested on the seventh day but He did not give up doing good. Without some work on the Sabbath the world would fall into chaos. Jesus is demonstrating or showing us that when the chance to do good presents itself we must not ignore it. We should not put off doing good because we have to go out or say we'll do it later or but it's Sunday. The reading from Ezekiel continues the theme of water, of water flowing from God's temple, the water of life. Verse 12 'On the banks, on both sides of the river, there will grow all kinds of trees for food. Their leaves will not wither nor their fruit fail because the water for them flows from the sanctuary or from God'. A reminder that everything we have is God's gift,

despite what many people think, and when we turn to Him in faith, we receive all this, His forgiveness, His guidance and the promise of eternal life. Amen.

Let us pray.

Heavenly Father, we thank you for your creation and for everything you give us. Help us to be good stewards of your creation. We thank you for your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ who suffered death for us, so that we are forgiven and live our life with you now and for ever. Amen