

EXTENDING THE LORD'S DAY

Gospel Reflections & Catholic Teaching
for Home and Parish Use

Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time
February 5, 2012

Reading I: Job 7:1-4, 6-7
Reading II: 1 Corinthians 9:16-19, 22-23
Gospel: Mark 1:29-39



From the Catechism:: Christ's compassion toward the sick and his many healings of every kind of infirmity are a resplendent sign that "God has visited his people" and that the Kingdom of God is close at hand. Jesus has the power not only to heal, but also to forgive sins he has come to heal the whole man, soul and body; he is the physician the sick have need of. His compassion toward all who suffer goes so far that he identifies himself with them: "I was sick and you visited me." His preferential love for the sick has not ceased through the centuries to draw the very special attention of Christians toward all those who suffer in body and soul. It is the source of tireless efforts to comfort them...Moved by so much suffering Christ not only allows himself to be touched by the sick, but he makes their miseries his own: "He took our infirmities and bore our diseases." But he did not heal all the sick. His healings were signs of the coming of the Kingdom of God. They announced a more radical healing: the victory over sin and death through his Passover. On the cross Christ took upon himself the whole weight of evil and took away the "sin of the world," of which illness is only a consequence. By his passion and death on the cross Christ has given a new meaning to suffering: it can henceforth configure us to him and unite us with his redemptive Passion. (*Catechism of the Catholic Church #1503; 1505*).

Living Our Faith: The Church carries forward Christ's healing ministry in a variety of approaches. Catholic families in countless ways care for family members who are ill. There are numerous inspiring stories of an aging spouse who personally ministers to an ailing spouse in cases of Alzheimer's and other illnesses. Caregivers find that faith and prayer mean a great deal to them in these situations. A multitude of religious orders and congregations have established Catholic hospitals to take care of the physical and spiritual needs of the sick. Church-sponsored hospice care is another form of this ministry of healing. (*United States Catholic Catechism for Adults, pg.252*).

For Reflection: How has a difficult time in my life become a source of strength, hope and healing?

Prayer: Your people give you all thanks and praise. We put our trust in you and celebrate the blessings of the Good News: You heal the broken hearted and bind up all our wounds. By your grace and your example, help us to carry out your work in the world. We make this prayer in the Name of Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with the Father and the Holy Spirit, One God, forever: Amen.