

MONDAY, DECEMBER 7

DO YOU SEE THE PERSON ON CRUTCHES OR THE ONE BEGGING NEAR THE DOOR?

Two people in the image obviously need physical healing, the person on crutches and the one crippled near the door. But all of us carry our own internal wounds. Consider the places in your own life that might need healing. In our relationships, in our innermost selves, or even physical healing — what wouldn't you do to access healing if it were offered to you? Are you willing to go out of your way in order to be healed?

Like the paralytic in today's gospel story, it is likely that we would do just about anything to be relieved of our hurting. However, we know that the healing of the paralytic is about more than just relief from pain. Rather, it is about the faithful going out of their way to allow God to work in their lives; and it is about Jesus's attentiveness not only to the man's physical ailment, but to his spiritual and emotional healing as well, in the form of forgiveness of sins.

Additionally, we know that Jesus came to flip perceptions. Especially during Advent, we are called to let go of some of our dearest-held senses of ego and identity and to, instead, look with the eye of the heart to see as God sees. As we are crushed with Christmas preparations, it can be easy to fall into the trap of performing traditions rather than authentically experiencing them.



“We have seen incredible things today,” says the group as they return home glorifying God. While perhaps they fully expected Jesus to heal their friend, their astonishment is authentic. Amid pain and suffering, it can be difficult to remember that, indeed, incredible things are also happening everyday across the ministry. Experiences of God's saving grace occur daily in juxtaposition to the difficulties that are also experienced. Like so many other aspects of our faith, both/and abounds.

The way Jesus attends to the paralytic as a whole person is the foundation for our work in Catholic health care. Indeed, it is what we strive for each day in our ministries as we model our care for patients and residents after Jesus. However, are there ways in which we might also use the faith of the paralytic and his companions as a model for our work? How do we go out of our way to allow God to work in our lives?

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