

Seventeenth Sunday in Ordinary Time *July 26, 2020*

“And behold, they brought to him a paralytic, lying on his bed; and when Jesus saw their faith he said to the paralytic, ‘Take heart, my son; your sins are forgiven.’” (Matthew 9:2)

Last Sunday we examined how God, through the hand of Moses in the Old Testament, had established a formal liturgical ceremony for His people to confess their sins, offer sacrifice, and receive forgiveness. As we now turn our attention to the New Testament, one may ask if Jesus, through His public ministry, sought to either alter or affirm this liturgical practice? Plainly put, did Jesus establish another means for mankind to seek and receive God’s forgiveness for sins committed?

To answer this question, we must turn to the fifth chapter of Gospel of Matthew. *“Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets. I have come not to abolish but to fulfill.”* (Matthew 5:17). Our faith teaches us that Jesus fulfilled the Law of Moses through His sacrifice upon the cross. Remember, Jesus, as both Son of God and great High Priest, offered Himself as a spotless victim for the forgiveness of sins upon the altar of the cross. At this moment, He perfectly completes what was announced to Joseph, his foster father, in the dream which proclaimed His Incarnation: *“she will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.”* (Matthew 1:21).

Our faith teaches further that Jesus established His Church to perpetuate the work He had begun during His earthly life. She would go out to the ends of the earth to teach, baptize, and save all of His children. I present one question for your reflection this week which I will attempt to answer next week. If we believe and profess the above statements to be true, then could we not also believe and profess that the mission of His Church, a principle mission, would necessarily be to continue to reconcile mankind to God? And if this is so, would He not have given His Church a share in His power and authority to see this mission through?