

THE ORTHODOX WEEKLY BULETIN VESTAL, CLIFFWOOD, NEW JERSEY

SICKNESS COMES IN MANY FORMS

The **SUNDAY OF THE PARALYTIC** seems almost out of place in the Paschal cycle of services. This a day is dedicated to commemorating a miracle which, historically and chronologically, took place quite early in Christ's minstry. At first glance, it appears to have no correlation with the joyful theme of the Resurrection, which we continue to celebrate. Careful study, however, shows that a subtle, but wonderful connection can be made between this miraculous event and our Saviour's rising from the dead.

The power of Jesus to **HEAL** is intimately linked to His Resurrection. It proclaims to us that He who can overcome death in His **OWN** body certainly has power over **ALL** human flesh. Simply put, our Lord can heal the paralytic because He Himself can rise from the Dead.

Today's Gospel lesson is a touching story of a man waiting for 38 years for someone to help him into the healing waters of the pool of Bethesda. How heart-breaking are his words to Christ: "**I have no one to put me into the pool.**" With compassion for the lonely paralytic, Jesus commands the man to do something that he must have longed to do for nearly four decades: "**Rise, take up your bed and walk!**"

So caught up in the joy of this miracle, it is easy for us to overlook the stern admonition Ggven to the paralytic by Christ after curing him: "**Sin no more, lest something worse happens to you.**" Sickness and affliction come in many forms. While physical pain and suffering seem to be the greatest obstacles to a happy life, we must remembr that **SPIRITUAL ILLNESSES** have consequences that are much more severe. Remember how Christ once condemned those who have eyes "**but do not see**" and who have ears "**but do not hear.**" Fortunately, our Saviour is always there to provide relief from any "**sickness of the soul.**" Truly He is the "**Physician**" of our bodies and souls.