

## Seventh Sunday of the Year

### Don't give up

#### INTRODUCTION

Have you ever been in a situation where things seemed hopeless or impossible? Did you give up or carry on trying until you succeeded? In today's Gospel, we hear how the determination and faith of a cripple's friends finally paid off.

#### SIGN OF THE CROSS

#### LIGHT THE CANDLES

As we light the candles today, we pray that the light of Jesus will shine in our lives and show us the path we must follow to everlasting life.

#### SORRY

As we journey through life, we will stumble and fall many times, making mistakes and getting things wrong. Jesus is always ready to reach out a forgiving hand and help us to our feet so we can try again. Sing Sorry Song 3.

#### GLORIA

#### GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia.

Help us to listen to your word, Lord,  
and keep it in our hearts.

Alleluia, alleluia.

#### GOSPEL (MARK 2:1-12)

After Jesus had cured a leper, news of his power spread far and wide. Wherever he stayed, crowds of people gathered outside to hear him preach or hoping that he might cure them.

One day, as Jesus was preaching, four men carrying a stretcher arrived. The man on the stretcher was paralyzed and could not walk, and his friends hoped that Jesus would cure him. Because the crowds were so great, there was not much room, and they could not carry the stretcher close to Jesus. So they climbed onto the roof and made a hole above where Jesus was standing.

Then they lowered the stretcher down gently on long ropes. Their faith in Jesus was plain for all to see. Jesus said to the paralyzed man, "Get up,

take your stretcher and walk home, my friend."

Everyone watched in amazement as the man got up, picked up his mat, and hurried out to his friends, praising God for all his goodness.

#### DISCUSSION

Crowds of people followed Jesus wherever he went. Many of these people were crippled or ill, and had heard about the miraculous cures Jesus had performed. They followed him hoping that he would cure them, too. Some believed that Jesus was the promised one sent by God, and came to listen to him and to try to follow his ways.

Imagine how difficult it was for the four men to push through a large crowd with their friend on a stretcher. But the men had a brainstorm; they climbed onto the roof of the house and made a hole through which they lowered the stretcher. They could do this because poorer homes had a roof made from branches plastered with mud, with a staircase leading up to the roof.

When the man was lowered through the roof, Jesus was impressed by the determination and faith of his friends. They would not give up even when things seemed impossible, because they believed that Jesus could cure their friend. Jesus rewarded their faith by making their friend walk again.

This story shows us that when our belief in Jesus is strong enough, nothing is impossible. Against all the odds, the friends of the paralyzed man were determined to get him close to Jesus. They had complete faith that Jesus would have the power and the compassion to cure their friend. When faith is so strong, Jesus will never turn us away but will reach out to help us.

#### ACTIVITY

Copy the bookmarks onto some cardboard and give one to each child. Discuss the crisis illustrated in each picture, then color the bookmarks.

#### CREED

#### CLOSING PRAYER

Let us pray

for sick and disabled people everywhere.

May their faith and belief in Jesus be strong,

so that his love will reach out

with its healing touch.

