

" The Lord Jesus can make me clean "

Reading 1: Leviticus 13:1-2, 44-46

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 31:1-2, 5, 11.

Reading 2: 1 Corinthians 10:31-11:1

Gospel : Mark 1:40:45

Scripture: *Mark 1:40-45*

And a leper came to him begging him, and kneeling said to him, "If you will, you can make me clean." Moved with pity, he stretched out his hand and touched him, and said to him, "I will; be clean." And immediately the leprosy left him, and he was made clean. And he sternly charged him, and sent him away at once, and said to him, "See that you say nothing to any one; but go, show yourself to the priest, and offer for your cleansing what Moses commanded, for a proof to the people." But he went out and began to talk freely about it, and to spread the news, so that Jesus could no longer openly enter a town, but was out in the country; and people came to him from every quarter.

Meditation: Do you seek the Lord Jesus with expectant faith? No one who sought Jesus out was refused his help. Even the untouchables and the outcasts of Jewish society found help in him. Unlike the people of Jesus' time who fled at the sight of a leper, Jesus touched the leper who approached him and he made him whole and clean. Why was this so remarkable? Lepers were outcasts of society. They were driven from their homes and communities and left to fend for themselves. Their physical condition was terrible as they slowly lost the use of their limbs and withered away. They were not only shunned but regarded as "already dead" even by their relatives. The Jewish law forbade anyone from touching or approaching a leper, lest ritual defilement occur.

This leper did something quite remarkable. He approached Jesus confidently and humbly, expecting that Jesus could and would heal him. Normally a leper would be stoned or at least warded off if he tried to come near a rabbi. Jesus not only grants the man his request, but he demonstrates the personal love, compassion, and tenderness of God in his physical touch. The medical knowledge of his day would have regarded such contact as grave risk for incurring infection. Jesus met the man's misery with compassion and tender kindness. He communicated the love and mercy of God in a sign that spoke more eloquently than words. He touched the man and made him clean - not only physically but spiritually as well.

How do you approach those who are difficult to love, or who are shunned by others because they are deformed or have some defect? Do you show them kindness and offer them mercy and help as Jesus did? The Lord is always ready to show us his mercy and to free us from whatever makes us unclean, unapproachable, or unloving towards others.

Questions for Community Faith Sharing:

1. To proclaim the Good News means to give witness to the experience of Jesus that one has. The leper tells others the good that Jesus has done to him. This witness leads others to accept the Good News of God which Jesus brings to us. What is the witness that you give?
2. Jesus gave the healed leper the strong warning, "See that you don't tell this to anyone." But the former leper did not obey Jesus. He went straight out and freely spread the news. Do you think the leper did the right thing? Explain why.

"Lord Jesus, inflame my heart with your love and make me clean and whole in body, mind, and spirit. May I never doubt your love nor cease to tell others of your mercy and compassion."