

# Sunday Message

28TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

THE WORD

Year C • 12 October 2025 • Psalter Week 4



## IN FROM THE COLD LUKE 17:11-19

Today's Gospel is the famous story about the cleansing of lepers. Leprosy is the name the Bible gives to many forms of skin disease, and not necessarily to the medical condition known today as leprosy, which is more accurately called Hansen's Disease.

The Bible has detailed rules (especially in the Book of Leviticus) for detecting such skin diseases. It treats them not just as a medical condition but as one that also carries a degree of religious impurity. Ancient medical knowledge was very limited, and sickness usually carried a religious as well as a physical significance. That is why the Bible gives a priest responsibility for assessing the degree of contagion and whether it is a serious case and, finally, certifying that the sufferer is cured.

It's possible that these ten victims are living together in a kind of settlement set aside for people like them, a kind of leprosarium. They observe the rules of avoiding contact with other people, but instead of calling out that they are 'unclean,' as the Law requires, they ask Jesus to take pity on them. He tells them to go to the priests responsible for assessing their skin condition. On the way, they realise that their skin has suddenly improved.

It is here we discover the point of this story. Nine of those who have been cured continue their journey, eager to meet their loved ones and get back into the flow of everyday life. Who would blame them? But one acts differently – the Samaritan who returns to throw himself in gratitude at Jesus' feet. Jesus recognises that it is a foreigner who has returned to give thanks. His final words to the Samaritan – "Rise and go your way; your faith has made you well" – are a reminder that the Gospel's message of salvation will eventually come to the Samaritans also. Jesus has demonstrated once more, as he did in the story of the Good Samaritan, how open these people are to receiving the good news of salvation. ■

### SAY

"I thank you, Lord, for all you have given me. Help me always to have a grateful heart."

### DO

Visit a loved one who lives alone or in a nursing home and bring them some of the 'ease' and comfort of the healing presence of Jesus.

### PRAY

When the Samaritan returns to Jesus to say thanks, Jesus tells him that it is his faith that has made him well. Because the Samaritan believed, he was restored to health. Ask the Lord to increase your faith.

### LEARN

Christians are people with grateful hearts.

Thankfulness is actively acknowledging what God and others do for us and articulating it, making sure to let them know.



### REFLECT

We are all very painfully aware now of what it's like to be physically cut off from others. During the Covid pandemic, we all had to practise social distancing to keep ourselves safe and prevent the highly contagious illness from spreading. It was a stressful time, especially for those living alone and older people cut off from their families. Despite the advances in communications technology which enabled people to stay connected and to see each other on FaceTime or Zoom, people felt the pain of isolation. They felt the absence of physical contact – a handshake, hug, kiss, an embrace, a shoulder to cry on, the physical expression of intimacy we need in order to flourish and grow. People experienced what social scientists call 'skin hunger,' touch deprivation. Experts say skin hunger is a major factor in incidents of depression among humans. All of us who were physically cut off from loved ones

during the Covid lockdown know exactly what is meant by skin hunger.

It gives us a good idea of what life was like for the lepers in today's Gospel. If you look at the word 'disease,' you'll notice it is made up of two parts: 'dis-' which usually means that something is out of place, e.g. disorder or dislocated, and 'ease' or comfort. To suffer from 'disease' in this sense is something worse than just being sick.

The lepers had to practise social distancing. They were removed from their families and from the rest of society. They suffered not only from their skin condition but also from skin hunger. No wonder they pleaded with Jesus to help them. No wonder that, after being healed, nine of them were so excited they forgot to thank Jesus for restoring their lives and their families to them.

All the healing stories of Jesus bring out this point: that he overcomes 'dis-ease' –

the distancing of suffering people from the community where they should be loved and cherished – every bit as much as he overcomes physical illness.

It's a lesson for how we should treat the sick and the isolated. It is not easy to be old or sick today. We live in a youth- and beauty-obsessed culture, the world of 'Instagram-face,' that promotes unrealistic, filtered versions of people. In this world of glamour and the influencer, of diets and workouts, of bronzed bodies and chiselled looks, the old, sick, and disabled can be overlooked, excluded, isolated from public view, forgotten. Some people refuse to visit hospitals or nursing homes because it's too distressing. There is an impulse to dodge the reality of illness, decay and old age.

Jesus excluded nobody from his love and attention. He cared especially for the marginalised and discarded ones. He wants us to do likewise. ■



**ENTRANCE ANTIPHON**

*If you, O Lord, should mark iniquities,  
Lord, who could stand?  
But with you is found forgiveness,  
O God of Israel.*

**COLLECT**

May your grace, O Lord, we pray,  
at all times go before us and follow after  
and make us always determined  
to carry out good works.  
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

**FIRST READING** 2 Kings 5:14-17

A reading from the Second Book of Kings.

In those days: Naaman the Syrian went down and dipped himself seven times in the Jordan, according to the word of Elisha, the man of God, and his flesh was restored like the flesh of a little child, and he was clean. Then he returned to the man of God, he and all his company, and he came and stood before him. And he said, 'Behold, I know that there is no God in all the earth but in Israel; so accept now a present from your servant.' But Elisha said, 'As the LORD lives, before whom I stand, I will receive none.' And Naaman urged Elisha to take it, but he refused. Then Naaman said, 'If not, please let there be given to your servant two mule-loads of earth, for from now on your servant will not offer burnt offering or sacrifice to any god but the LORD.'

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**RESPONSORIAL PSALM** Psalm 98(97):1. 2-3b. 3c-4. R. cf. 2b

**R: The LORD has shown his salvation to the nations.**

1. O sing a new song to the LORD,  
for he has worked wonders.  
His right hand and his holy arm  
have brought salvation. **R.**
2. The LORD has made known his salvation,  
has shown his deliverance to the nations.  
He has remembered his merciful love  
and his truth for the house of Israel. **R.**
3. All the ends of the earth have seen  
the salvation of our God.  
Shout to the LORD, all the earth;  
break forth into joyous song,  
and sing out your praise. **R.**

**SECOND READING** 2 Timothy 2:8-13

A reading from the Second Letter of Saint Paul to Timothy.

Beloved: Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, the offspring of David, as preached in my gospel, for which I am suffering, bound with chains as a criminal. But the word of God is not bound! Therefore I endure everything for the sake of the elect, that they also may obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.

The saying is trustworthy, for:

If we have died with him, we will also live with him;  
if we endure, we will also reign with him;  
if we deny him, he also will deny us;  
if we are faithless, he remains faithful –  
for he cannot deny himself.

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**ACCLAMATION BEFORE THE GOSPEL** 1 Thessalonians 5:18

**R: Alleluia, alleluia.**

In everything give thanks;  
for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

**R: Alleluia.**

**GOSPEL** Luke 17:11-19

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke.

On the way to Jerusalem Jesus was passing along between Samaria and Galilee. And as he entered a village, he was met by ten lepers, who stood at a distance and lifted up their voices, saying, 'Jesus, Master, have mercy on us.' When he saw them he said to them, 'Go and show yourselves to the priests.' And as they went they were cleansed. Then one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, praising God with a loud voice; and he fell on his face at Jesus' feet, giving him thanks. Now he was a Samaritan. Then Jesus answered, 'Were not ten cleansed? Where are the nine? Was no one found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?' And he said to him, 'Rise and go your way; your faith has made you well.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

**PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS**

Accept, O Lord, the prayers of your faithful  
with the sacrificial offerings,  
that, through these acts of devotedness,  
we may pass over to the glory of heaven.  
Through Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

**COMMUNION ANTIPHON**

*The rich suffer want and go hungry,  
but those who seek the Lord lack no blessing.*

Or

*When the Lord appears, we shall be like him,  
for we shall see him as he is.*

**PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

We entreat your majesty most humbly, O Lord,  
that, as you feed us with the nourishment  
which comes from the most holy Body and Blood of your Son,  
so you may make us sharers of his divine nature.  
Who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

**Amen.**