

Lectionary Faith-Sharing Community

6TH ORDINARY SUNDAY

Cycle B - February 14, 2021



OPENING PRAYER

Guide: *Praise the Lord, who heals the brokenhearted.*

All: **Praise the Lord for he is good; sing praise to our God, for he is gracious.**

Leader: Great is the Lord and mighty in power; to his wisdom there is not limit.

All: **The Lord sustains the lowly; the wicked he casts to the ground.**

Guide: *We invoke the presence of the Holy Spirit:*

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love. Send, Lord your spirit and renew the face of the earth.

Oh God, that you have instructed the hearts of your faithful with the light of the Holy Spirit, grant us through the same spirit that always enjoy her divine consolation. By Christ, our Lord. Amen.

FIRST READING [Leviticus 13 (1) – 2 (44-46)]

The Lord said to Moses and Aaron, "If someone has on his skin a scab or pustule or blotch which appears to be the sore of leprosy, he shall be brought to Aaron, the priest, or to one of the priests among his descendants.

If the man is leprosy and unclean, the priest shall declare him unclean by reason of the sore on his head.

"The one who bears the sore of leprosy shall keep his garments rent and his head bare, and shall muffle his beard; he shall cry out, 'Unclean, unclean!' As long as the sore is on him he shall declare himself unclean, since he is in fact unclean. He shall dwell apart, making his abode outside the camp."

The book of Leviticus contains all the religious norms of the Old Testament (rules for sacrifices, investiture of priests, celebration of the festivals of the year) and you can also read the norms about purity (of people, animals and things). In those days, purity was interpreted in a different way. It was a ritual and not a moral concept, like now. Impurity was understood as something that could stain people, disabling them from coming into contact with God (and his people). Everything that was related to life and death carried impurity (blood, semen, menstruation, fermentation, skin diseases, corpses of people or animals). The priests had to be extremely careful not to "contaminate themselves" since their office forced them to be "closer" to God.

We know that leprosy is incurable, but in those days any serious skin condition was called that way. That is why it was foreseen that in the event of a cure from this disease, people should go to the priests to be declared "pure" again and thus be able to return to their family and to society.

(1) How would you feel if some illness forced you to live far from your family and isolated from society?

(2) Reflect on what God expects of us. Share with the group.

(4) After answering the previous answer, ask yourself whether or not there is a danger that the ceremonies and rituals occupy all your religious interest and distract you from the effort to live the life that God expects of you.

(5) After answering the previous question, reflect on the best way to take advantage of the ceremonies and rites of the Church to procure the life that God expects of you.

SECOND READING [1 Corinthians 10 (31) – 11 (1)]

Brothers and sisters:

Whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do everything for the glory of God. Avoid giving offense, whether to the Jews or Greeks or the church of God, just as I try to please everyone in every way, not seeking my own benefit but that of the many, that they may be saved. Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ.

This reading is best understood within the context in which it is found. In chapter 8, Paul clarifies the matter of eating the meat of animals sacrificed to pagan idols and then sold to the public. The apostle told them that since idols are nothing, that meat did not contain anything to differentiate it from the rest. Later, in chapter 9, Paul presents himself to us as an example of renouncing his rights for the sake of the evangelizing mission. And now, in chapter 10, he proclaims that freedom of conscience is not for your own benefit but for the benefit of others. This in particular should make us reflect on the harassment of the current world that wants to force us to put our own "needs" and a supposed right to indulge ourselves above all things, leaving for later the interest in other concerns.

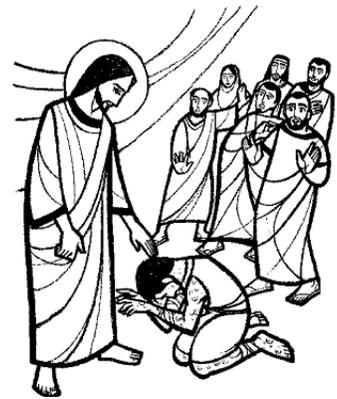
- (1) Is there something we do that is not fundamental and we give it more importance than it deserves?
- (2) Would you dare to say the same thing that Paul says in the last line? Why?

GOSPEL [Mark 1 (40-45)]

A leper came to Jesus and kneeling down begged him and said, "If you wish, you can make me clean." Moved with pity, he stretched out his hand, touched him, and said to him, "I do will it. Be made clean."

The leprosy left him immediately, and he was made clean. Then, warning the him sternly, he dismissed him at once. He said to him, "See that you tell no one anything, but go, show yourself to the priest and offer for your cleansing what Moses prescribed; that will be proof for them."

The man went away and began to publicize the whole matter. He spread the report abroad so that it was impossible for Jesus to enter a town openly. He remained outside in deserted places, and people kept coming to him from everywhere.



We come to the end of the first chapter of Mark, which sums up the beginning of Jesus' ministry in Galilee. Without a doubt, the first reading has been chosen to prepare the ground for this passage. When Jesus heals the leper he performs a triple sign: First, he restores to society someone who was expelled from it, due to his illness that had made him "unclean". Second, he gives a demonstration of the divine power that was his own and that allowed him to perform these kinds of wonders. And third, he shows humility by acknowledging compliance with the rules dictated by Moses when he orders the cured to appear before the authorities.

Although Jesus requests discretion ("Messianic Secret") to prevent people from looking for him only to obtain what he did not come to bring, it is impossible to remain silent. The announcement of the presence of Jesus Christ cannot be silenced, it is addressed to anyone who wants to accept it.

- (1) Have you ever experienced a major physical healing? (not necessarily miraculous or supernatural). Share how your life changed after regaining health.
- (3) After answering the previous answer, imagine what the leper felt. Would it have been natural for him to keep the silence requested by Jesus Christ?
- (4) Many sick people cry out to God for physical healing. Some receive it and some don't. What explanation can you give to this?
- (5) Have you ever thought that maybe you are the answer to the prayer of someone who suffers? Are you aware of our mission as bearers of the Lord's mercy?

CLOSING PRAYER

Leader: *Lord of the day and night, of the beginning and of the end: At the closing of this meeting, once again we lift up our hearts to You, divine source of all life.*

All: **We thank you for the gifts you have bestowed on us. We thank you for the love expressed in companionship and understanding, mutual respect and shared ideas. We give you thanks for your holy power that will help us in our concerns that we have shared. For these and all the gifts that come from You, we give you thanks.**

Leader: *Lord hear our prayers* (attendees can propose their own needs of prayer)

All: **In the same way in which we have being blessed by your presence as we meet, we ask now to bless our safe return to our homes. May your holy blessing be over us + in the name of the Father ...**

Leader: *May the King of the eternal glory gather us together in His heavenly banquet. Amen.*

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