

SIXTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME, YEAR B; HOMILY HIGHLIGHTS

READINGS; 1st Lev. 13: 1-2, 45-46; 2nd 1Cor. 10: 31, 11:1; Gospel Mk. 1: 40-45

Introduction; Love cannot remain by itself- it has no meaning. Love has to be put into action, and that action is service. This is what we see in today's gospel when Jesus responds to the request of the leper promptly. Love of God to His people is a love in action is a love that does something for the sake of saving and raising the people from their fallen state to becoming sons and daughters of God. We are all sick with various infirmities but the greatest of all is sin. Jesus responds with the same attitude every time we ask him to heal us, "I want to, be made clean".

Reflection; being unwanted, unloved, uncared for, forgotten by everybody, I think that is a much greater hunger, a much greater poverty than the person who has nothing to eat (Mother Teresa). This is the setting of today's first reading which creates a boundary and separates the sick people from the rest of the society. Society has a major role to play in making the lives of individuals better and worth living. The conditions we put and laws that we pass to deal with some issues should consider above all the human dignity before anything else. There are some things the society should take responsibility to deal with in safeguarding human dignity unlike others which remain at the level of individuals to deal with.

Leprosy was and even now in some places is considered as the result of sinfulness. Separation was the first step to keep others safe but also to have easy management of the problem for the victims. There were some extremes on how they dealt with such victims especially when it was seen as deadly and resulting from sin. Jesus heals the person who asked him to, and he did that immediately wanting to give a new teaching to the people that the son of God came to give life. The healing of Jesus did not aim at closing hospitals or taking away jobs of the doctors but more than that; to restore life to the suffering children of God who had been overcome with sickness and demonic possessions. Restoration from physical, psychological, spiritual and social enslavement needed something more than simply healing. It also needed faith.

Jesus always according to Mark in a special way maintained the messianic secret; "do not let anyone know about this". Not for any other reason but wanting everyone to understand Him correctly. He avoided misunderstanding and confusion among His followers, and those who waited for the messiah. Unlike the scribes and Pharisees who always wanted public notice and respect over their religious practices, Jesus did everything from a different perspective. He also did everything different from them all. He did that to avoid being taken as a political leader, propagandist, social miracle worker or false prophet who does something for praise and money.

The world we live in today is full of advertisements, politicians, doctors, experts in various walks of life use the media to attract attention and find favor with people on business accounts. Social media today takes precedence over everything. Let us pray that we may choose the best out of all we have, the best that brings us closer to Christ who heals us of all our sicknesses.