

2 Kings 5:14-17

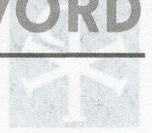
Psalm 98:1, 2-3, 3-4

2 Timothy 2:8-13

Luke 17:11-19

Twenty-Eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time

October 9, 2022



REFLECTION

Leprosy was a social as well as a physical affliction in Jesus' day. The ten lepers call out to Jesus from a distance because they were ostracized from the community for as long as they remained potentially contagious. Christ sends the ten lepers to the priests to be declared clean, undergo ritual purification and be allowed to rejoin the community.

What made the tenth leper different from the first nine? Why did he come back? All ten suffered ostracization from the community, all ten came to Christ to ask for healing, all ten were healed. We can imagine that perhaps the nine who didn't return were simply eager to rejoin the community and leave the past behind.

What we do know is that Jesus commended the one who returned for his faith. While all ten had sufficient hope—or desperation—to turn to an itinerant preacher for healing, only one had the faith to look past the healing to recognize the hand of God at work and give thanks.



ACTION

Sometimes we are like the first nine lepers: we can be so focused on our own problems and hurts that we lose sight of the people around us. Imitate the tenth leper instead by expressing your gratitude in some way to the people who have helped you in the past, thanking them for what they have done for you and for who they are. Also, this week try to be more aware of opportunities to express gratitude in your daily life, and do so.



Check out this article about Lou Gehrig's "Luckiest Man on the Face of the Earth" speech:

https://www.huffpost.com/entry/75-years-later-lou-gehrig_b_5565605



QUESTIONS

- ❖ What do today's readings teach you about the Christian life?
- ❖ The leper in the Gospel is saved both physically and spiritually. How might physical illness be a good analogy for the effect sin has on us and those around us? How might it not be a good analogy?
- ❖ Why do you think it is significant that the only one to recognize Jesus as the source of healing was a Samaritan, a foreigner?



October 9, 2022

TWENTY-EIGHTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

LECTIONARY #144C

2 Kings 5:14-17

Psalms 98:1, 2-3, 3-4

2 Timothy 2:8-13

Luke 17:11-19

Prepare for the Word

The following elements may be used by the catechist, teacher, or youth minister to prepare to facilitate today's session with teens. You may integrate this information into the reflection and discussion on today's readings.

Leader's Context

Jesus is travelling through Samaria on the way to Jerusalem when he encounters people with leprosy crying out for help. Moved by compassion, Jesus miraculously cures them by sending them to see the priest. On the way, one leper realizes he is healed and returns to say thank you. An exploration of this history of the Samaritans and the condition of leprosy enhance the understanding and significance of this miracle. We can reflect on giving thanks to God, but knowing why we give thanks creates a strong intentionality.

Q FOCUS: *Jesus reconciles us back to God, our community, and to ourselves.*

Liturgical Calendar Connection

The Gospel readings in Ordinary Time challenge us to live by Jesus' teaching and example. We see the saints take up this challenge and become role models for our own life of faith. The Church celebrates St. John XXIII on October 11. He was pope from 1958-1963 and was an instrumental figure of the twentieth century. He convened the Second Vatican Council and also sought to bring a peaceful conclusion to the Cuban Missile Crisis. He wrote the encyclical *Peace on Earth*. On October 15 the Church celebrates St. Teresa of Avila, a Doctor of the Church. (Doctor of the Church is a title given to some saints

who, through their writings and actions, greatly contributed to the Church's understanding of God and humanity's relationship with him.) She was a woman of her time and a woman for all time. She helped reform her religious community to become better witnesses of Christ and imitate his poverty so to better serve others.

Church Teaching Connection

"Those who, like the healed Samaritan, know how to say 'thank you,' show that they do not consider everything as their due but as a gift that comes ultimately from God, even when it arrives through men and women or through nature. Faith thus entails the opening of the person to the Lord's grace; it means recognizing that everything is a gift, everything is grace. What a treasure is hidden in two small words: 'thank you!'" (Pope Benedict XVI, Angelus Message, October 14, 2007).

Hear the Word

Use this resource, a Lectionary, or a Bible to proclaim the reading. The book should be held reverently or placed on a lectern. If possible, light a candle that is placed near where the Gospel will be proclaimed. Gesture for teens to stand.

Gospel Acclamation

Use the same musical setting that is used in your parish or at school Masses. Teens may help with music and proclaim the Gospel.

Alleluia, alleluia.

Gospel

Luke 17:11-19

Reader: A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke.

All: Glory to you, O Lord.

All make the Sign of the Cross on their forehead, lips, and heart.

As Jesus continued his journey to Jerusalem, he traveled through Samaria and Galilee. As he was

entering a village, ten lepers met him. They stood at a distance from him and raised their voices, saying, "Jesus, Master! Have pity on us!" And when he saw them, he said, "Go show yourselves to the priests." As they were going they were cleansed. And one of them, realizing he had been healed, returned, glorifying God in a loud voice; and he fell at the feet of Jesus and thanked him. He was a Samaritan. Jesus said in reply, "Ten were cleansed, were they not? Where are the other nine? Has none but this foreigner returned to give thanks to God?" Then he said to him, "Stand up and go; your faith has saved you."

Reader: The Gospel of the Lord.

All: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Everyone may be seated.

Reflect on the Word

When beginning the reflection and discussion about today's readings, first refer to the handout for today. Ask teens what they learned about themselves and about Christian discipleship from performing the action for the week and journaling. Ask teens about the readings of the day: What struck them? What do they think the readings mean? How do the readings affect their own lives? Then begin the following reflection:

Ten lepers were healed but only one returned to say thank you. The message of today's Gospel seems pretty simple. We should be thankful.

► What are you thankful for?

On closer inspection of this Gospel, we learn quite a bit about what brings about this powerful thanksgiving. To understand this, some background information on Samaritans and lepers can help.

Jesus is travelling between Samaria and Galilee, on his way to Jerusalem. The Samaritans were once part of Israel, but the Assyrians conquered the land. There is a long history of bad blood between Jews and Samaritans. Historically speaking, Jews thought there was no such thing as a "good Samaritan."

As Jesus walks, some lepers cry out to him and ask him for his help. Leprosy was a skin disease that made a person "ritually unclean." Leprosy is an actual disease and still exists today. In the time of Scripture, any skin condition, be it acne, eczema, or the actual

disease of leprosy (now known as Hansen's disease) would have negatively impacted a person's social status. If a person were unclean, that means they would be cut off from society. An unclean person was not allowed to interact with anyone else, because if they touched them, that person would become unclean.

This means that lepers were not allowed to the market to buy food, or to the well for water. They could not go to school to learn or to their job to earn money. They couldn't be around their family or friends. They were even shut out from religious gatherings. They were isolated and alone, unable to interact with loved ones and friends. To be a leper was to be cut off from your entire life.

► Have you ever felt cut off from important people in your life? How did you feel about that?

We know that at least one of the lepers was a Samaritan. In the eyes of faithful Jews, you could not be more marginalized than that. But, when Jesus cleanses them, he doesn't just heal their outward condition, he also heals the hidden brokenness that came from being cut off from their community.

The priests could declare the lepers ritually clean, which is why Jesus instructs them to go to the priests. In this, he is also reconciling them back into community, into their families, and into their lives.

► Have you experienced a moment of reconciliation with someone who you had been separated from? How did this feel? Why was it important to be welcomed back into relationship?

This reconciliation and healing is what Jesus does for all of us. He can heal us from every brokenness and restore us to God, our community, and even to our true selves. An important takeaway from today's Gospel is not just to be thankful for the salvation that God offers, but also that it is something we cannot earn. We don't deserve it. It is a pure gift. It is total grace. God does this because that is who God is.

When we are moved by grace, what else can we do but to act as the leper did—return ourselves to God and say thank you.

► So think again: what are you thankful for? How can you express your thanks to God?

Wrapping It Up

Consider these points to conclude the discussion and reflection. Integrate the thoughts and ideas that surfaced during the discussion as well as the “Church Teaching Connection” on page 38.

Ten lepers were healed but only one returned; our actions should inspire others to the gratitude we have for God.

Jesus not only heals the visible wounds, but the invisible ones as well.

Jesus’ healing is a pure gift of grace, and our appropriate response is “thank you.”

Act on the Word

Giving Thanks Skit

For this activity, you will need random objects for use in a skit and copies of today’s Gospel reading, Luke 17:11-19.

In this activity, the teens will create modern-day skits of one leper coming back to say thank you. Separate the young people into small groups. Instruct the groups they have ten minutes to create a skit modernizing the miraculous story found in today’s Gospel reading. To create a twist to the normal experience of skits incorporate these elements:

- ✱ Every group must incorporate a random object into their skit, that you will assign. A random object could be a bowling ball, a silly trophy, a pool noodle, or any object from your supplies.
- ✱ Each group must do their skit in a different genre. You can prewrite genres on slips of paper and have the groups pick one out of a hat. The genres can include action, comedy, horror, romantic comedy, sci-fi, and so on.

- ✱ You can assign a secret word for each group to say at least once in their skit. It could be the name of the church or a volunteer’s name.

After the copies of the passage are passed out and objects, genres, and secret words are assigned, give groups time to create the skits. Then present the skits and be sure to thank each group for presenting.

Conclude the activity by having small group discussions about the experience and how it helped the young people come to a better understanding of the Gospel. Other questions to consider include:

- ✱ How do you think Jesus felt as the lepers left?
- ✱ How do you think Jesus felt about the one leper who returned?
- ✱ What do you think the lepers did once they were declared “clean”?
- ✱ What kinds of things should we be thankful for?
- ✱ What are you personally grateful for today?

Closing Prayer

*Gracious God of our ancestors,
you lead your people and guide them
to be people of great thanks and praise.
Support us as we renew our efforts
to help others to see your glory
and the blessed world you have created.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.*

For Next Sunday

To help teens prepare for next Sunday’s Mass, print, email, or share on a blog or social media the handout found on the next page. The JPG and PDF files are available at www.ltp.org/lwgr. Encourage teens to attend Mass with family or friends.