

XIV Trinity 2023
Sermon – Saint Joseph Parish
Father Craig Looney
Galatians 5.16-24 St. Luke 17.11-19



Please and **thank you** are powerful words in any language. One of the first things our parents taught us was to say **please** when we asked for something and **thank you** when we got something. **Please** and **thank you** are two words that help build trust and maintain good relationships.

This morning's Gospel records the account of ten men who had a "dreaded skin disease", commonly translated as "leprosy". They may or may not have had Hansen's disease. Any visible rash or skin condition was suspect. According to the Book of Leviticus, any person with such a condition had to go see the priest, who would determine if the condition was contagious.

Under Jewish Law...a person with a contagious disease received a life-without-parole sentence. He would have been banned from the community, his family and his friends. He could only associate with other people who had a "dreaded skin disease". He would have been an outcast.

The ten men in today's Gospel heard Jesus was passing by and came to him for help. They kept their distance. "Jesus! Master! **Please** help us", they shouted, "Have pity on us". Jesus doesn't do anything to heal them. He instructs them to go show themselves to the priest.

The ten men showed they had faith in Jesus and headed off to see the priest. Along the way they were healed. Jesus requires faith on the part of people who ask for healing. Many people asked Jesus to heal them. He asked them, "Do you believe that I can do this?" Jesus asks us the same question? How will we answer the question?

The Gospel doesn't tell us how far the men traveled before they were healed. Only one man came back to **thank** Jesus for healing him. Luke makes a point of telling us he was a Samaritan, despised by the Jews, an outcast from Society even without a "dreaded skin disease". He was so overcome with emotion and fell down at Jesus' feet and cried and thanked God for healing him. Jesus tells him to get up and go...his faith made him well.

Jesus expresses disappointment at the failure of the other nine men to give thanks to God for healing them. Don't we like to be thanked when we do something good for someone? God likes for us to thank him for all he does for us in our lives. When we thank him...we are acknowledging he is the source of healing. James has it right..."Every good gift and perfect present comes from God." And that includes healing.

Please and **thank you**. We spend our whole lives asking God to **please** help us. In the Collect we ask God to **please** make the gifts of Faith, Hope and Love stronger in our hearts so we can do what is right and pleasing to him. We are grateful our sins have been forgiven and for the promise of everlasting life in heaven he has given us in his son, Jesus. But, do we sometimes forget to say **thank you**?

Jesus wants to see in us the same kind of Faith the Samaritan showed when he asked for help. Jesus wants us to believe that he can and will help us every day of our lives. He wants us to put our trust in him and to know God our Father is a loving Father who wants what's best for us.

Jesus said he has come so that we might enjoy life to the fullest. Let's also remember to thank God when things are going well. Those are the times we are most likely to take God for granted. He knows we sometimes live busy and hectic lives. The simple act of saying **thank you** to God for his many blessings in our lives helps us understand the deep relationship we have with him: He is our Father and we are his children.

The Samaritan in the Gospel trusted God and believed Jesus had the power to make him well. He is our hero because he has a sickness that cuts him off from everyone he loves, but he has hope things will get better. He is our hero because he acts the way we are supposed to act. He loves God and knows it was Jesus who healed him and he came back to say **thank you**.

Please and **thank you**. Small words. Powerful words. We should never hesitate to say **please** to God when we pray. Let's not forget to say **thank you**!

