



My dear Brothers and Sisters in the Lord,

In this Sunday's Gospel, St. Luke the Evangelist tells us that Jesus was visited by ten lepers when entering a village. Lepers were outcasts because of their condition, so they cried out, "*Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!*" (Luke 17:13) In this way, these lepers follow the example of St. Paul, who instructs the Hebrews, "*Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and for ever... Through him, then, let us continually offer a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that confess his name*" (Hebrews 13:8, 15).

Our Lord, taking pity on their desire to be healed & to be allowed into their community, tells them, "*Go and show yourselves to the priests*", and they are made well (Luke 17:14). However, of these ten, only one returns to thank Christ. Even more surprising, that former leper is a Samaritan. We must remember that Jews worshiped God in the Temple, but the Samaritans worshipped Him on Mount Gerizim. It is

for this reason, and many others, that the Jews and Samaritans considered each group an anathema. This is the reason Jesus says, "*Were not ten made clean? But the other nine, where are they? Was none of them found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?*" (Luke 17:18-19)

Our Lord does not say this to be critical of the Samaritan, but out of true surprise. Nine of these lepers turned to God after being cast out of their homes and families—but the moment they were cured by the Lord, they were "too busy" to offer thanks. Are we like the nine, who seek God in times of distress, yet forget Him once the storm passes? Or will we act like the Samaritan: will we seek Him in truth and faith, and, when He has comforted us, fall at His feet in prayer and thanks?

May we all have the strength of faith to cling to Lord—not only in times of distress, but joy and beauty as well, remembering not only to "*...confess his name*", but also to "*...not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God*" (Hebrews 13:16). In this way, when we next come to our Lord in prayer and truth, may His peace fill our souls, as He says, "*Get up and go on your way; your faith has made you well*" (Luke 17:19).

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