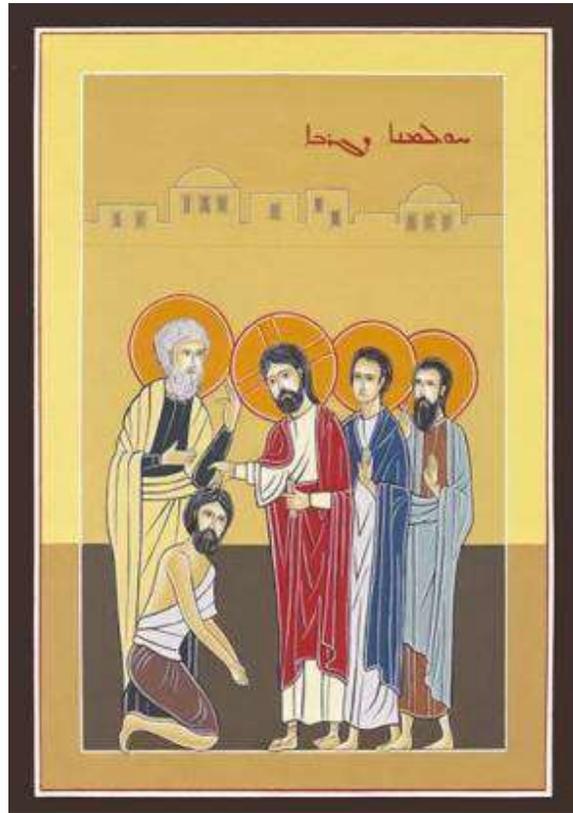


## Cleansing of the Leper

(Rom 6:12-23 / Mk 1:35-45)



Leprosy was the most dangerous illness in Jesus' time. Out of fear of contamination, these people, the lepers, were rejected and outcast. However, all of that didn't stop Jesus from touching the leper.

How much do we need this touch, to be repeated in our society nowadays?

Whatever the uncleanness of our humanity, it cannot stop Jesus from laying his hand and applying his touch.

In the past they used to put bells on the leper's necks, as a signal of their coming, so others could avoid their encounter. This is in addition to all the disgusting signs that the leprosy itself does on the leper's body. We can describe it by saying that the leper is a walking corpse.

This man comes beseeching Jesus and, despite all the alarming signs that must take Jesus away from him, Jesus did totally the opposite. He did what no one dared to do. At his time, he broke all the logical rules, the social and the religious ones.

The signs that expel people from us are the only ones, exclusively, that bring Jesus to us.

Being righteous is so good, but doing it for the purpose of only saving myself is not enough. It is for my salvation and for others as well.

Jesus infects the leper with his cleanliness; his purity was greater than the leper's uncleanness. Leprosy is the externally physical sign of what sin can do to us morally and psychologically, internally.

Jesus on the cross was worse than the leper; he was dejected, outcast and the ugliest person ever.

He trades his beauty with our ugliness. This is true love, to lose by sacrificing. What is this trade about? Jesus is the worst businessman-God ever.

After we took Jesus' beauty, we cannot anymore boast about it, as even as it is ours, it is still his.

As well, we cannot reject him once we get it, forgetting that he became the ugliest human being, for our sake.

Lent is the season of repentance. It takes us and leads us to the cross, the stations of the cross, and the cross itself takes us, leads us again and again to repentance.

Jesus' crucifixion replaced ours. When we look at the cross, we should see ourselves - not only Jesus - and when we see ourselves, we see then the one who replaced us.

When we buy anything, any item, we find a sticker at the bottom that tells us who makes it and where it is made. The same is true for our salvation. It is made by Jesus the son of God. However, we don't buy it (it is not a purchase we make). Jesus bought it for us. It is an invaluable gift; the sign that we accept it is our repentance.

How important is our repentance? It tells us what our attitude is and our position toward salvation. If it is difficult for you to confess, it could be an alarming sign, concerning your belief in Jesus's salvation.

Repentance is to unite your voice to the leper crying: "if you will, you can make me clean."

Being an evildoer is being an unclean sinner. Not only that, but also being satisfied with who you are.

Being a saint is being an unclean sinner as well, but not being happy with who you are.

Confession is knowing who you are. However, it is not enough, it is also knowing so well who Jesus your Savior is.

You need his beauty to touch and embody you. This is the importance of repentance, to accept your reality as a sinner and therefore his reality-Redeemer- as well.

As leprosy affects our body, organs, this is also what the effect of sin does to us.

I conclude by what our epistle to the Romans said:

“For just as you once yielded your members to impurity and to greater and greater iniquity, so now yield your members to righteousness for sanctification.”

Have a great Sunday!

Rev. Father Rami Razzouk