

Gospel for Saturday: "Of course I want to: be cured"

Commentary on the Gospel for Saturday after the Epiphany, during the Christmas season.

‘Lord, if you are willing, you can make me clean.’ The leper's actions in the Gospel teach us how to turn to the Lord with humility, trust and sincerity in order to obtain the remedy for all our weaknesses.

Evangelio (Lk 5:12-16)

Now Jesus was in one of the towns when a man appeared, covered with leprosy. Seeing Jesus he fell on his

face and implored him. “Sir,” he said “if you want to, you can cure me.”

Jesus stretched out his hand, touched him and said, “Of course I want to! Be cured!” And the leprosy left him at once. He ordered him to tell no one, “But go and show yourself to the priest and make the offering for your healing as Moses prescribed it, as evidence for them.”

His reputation continued to grow, and large crowds would gather to hear him and to have their sickness cured, but he would always go off to some place where he could be alone and pray.

Gospel Commentary

Today, Saint Luke recounts the healing of a leper. The narrative

includes several meaningful details. On one hand, this poor man was suffering from an advanced and malignant condition, as he was “covered with leprosy.” We can imagine the degree of physical and emotional suffering he endured. Not only would he have borne the wounds and discomfort throughout his body, but he also faced the sorrow of separation and isolation due to the contagious nature of his illness, which only the priests could certify as healed.

The evangelist also notes that this man did not merely ask for help; rather, he “fell on his face before Jesus and begged him.” This is a touching gesture, full of humility. In kneeling before the Lord, the man acknowledges his own poverty and vulnerability, pleading with sincerity and simplicity.

The leper's faith is remarkable. Perhaps he had been suffering for many years. Yet neither the severity of his condition nor the duration of his affliction diminished his trust in the Master of Galilee: "Lord, if you want to, you can cure me." He himself presents the only condition for his healing: that Jesus wills it. And the man obtains healing from the merciful heart of Jesus through a physical gesture: "He stretched out his hand and touched him." This action demonstrates closeness, compassion, and power.

Although Jesus must have performed hundreds, even thousands, of healings, it is significant that this particular scene was preserved in the Gospels. Indeed, "the leper typically represents the human race weakened by sin" (*Catena Aurea*, ad loc). From his actions, we can learn to approach the Lord with the same humility, trust, and sincerity to

obtain the remedy for all our weaknesses.

Christ “is our physician, and he heals our selfishness, if we let his grace penetrate to the depths of our soul. Jesus has taught us that the worst sickness is hypocrisy, the pride that leads us to hide our own sins. We have to be totally sincere with him. We have to tell the whole truth, and then we have to say: ‘Lord, if you will’ — and you are always willing — ‘you can make me clean.’ You know my weaknesses; I feel these symptoms; I suffer from these failings. We show him the wound, with simplicity, and if the wound is festering, we show the pus too. Lord, you have cured so many souls; help me to recognize you as the divine physician, when I have you in my heart or when I contemplate your presence in the Tabernacle” (*Christ is Passing By*, no. 93).

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