

XIV TRINITY 2017
SERMON – SAINT JOSEPH PARISH
FATHER CRAIG LOONEY
GALATIANS 5.16 St. LUKE 17.11



Ten men came to Jesus...they said **please** help us get well. Jesus never refused to heal anyone who asked for his help. Ten men got healed...only one came back to **thank** Jesus for healing him.

Please and **thank you** are simple yet powerful words in any language. We spend our whole lives asking God to **please** help us...do we also remember to **thank** him?

In the Collect we ask God to please make the gifts of faith, hope and love...gifts which we already have...stronger in our hearts...so we will not only actively seek to do what is right and pleasing to him...but love our work...our faith and hope depend entirely on the cultivation of love in our hearts.

Saint Paul tells us our human nature often gets in the way and causes us to engage in activities that are harmful and destructive to ourselves and other people. Instead we are to engage in activities of the Holy Spirit...love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, humility, and self-control.

When we ask God to **please** help us do those things that are right and good...we are showing him we take his promise of life in heaven seriously...and we must not forget to **thank** him for the gifts he has given us. And yes, we should ask God for healing of mind body and soul.

Jesus encountered many people who asked him to **please** help them and to heal them. Jesus is still traveling through Samaria...the place where most Samaritans lived...when ten men with a skin condition shouted at him from a distance to heal them.

We don't know for certain whether the ten men had Hansen's Disease...any skin condition was looked upon with a great deal of suspicion...it might be contagious...so the ten men would have had to live away from cities and their families and friends.

Jesus doesn't heal the ten men by touching them...he tells them to do exactly what the Book of Leviticus instructed them to do...go see a priest...only he could certify their skin

condition had cleared up and they could rejoin the community and Temple life. While they were on their way to the Temple all ten men were healed.

All ten men showed a certain amount of faith in taking Jesus at his word and heading off to the Temple...but only one man came back to **thank** him...and he was a Samaritan. He knew he had been healed by God...his faith convinced him to ask Jesus to **please** help him...his faith directed him to follow Jesus' instructions and go see the priest...his faith compelled him to return and **thank** Jesus.

We talk a lot about faith, hope and love in church. Jesus wants us to show the same kind of Faith the Samaritan showed when he asked for help. He wants us to believe our **please** help us will illicit a response from God...and God always answers our prayers...yes, no or wait a while. Our faith response must include a **thank you** regardless of the answer.

God expresses his love for us chiefly in showing mercy and compassion...much of what Paul says in today's Epistle mean we too must spend some time cultivating mercy and compassion toward others in our lives. When we ask God to **please** help us...we must ask him to **please** help others...and follow up the **please** with a **thank you**.

It's important we also remember to **thank** God when things are going well...not just when we find ourselves in crisis mode. We are most likely to ignore God or take his love for granted when we get wrapped up in our busy and hectic lives. Thanking God for his many blessings in our lives helps us understand God is our Father and we are his children. Fathers want what's best for their children.

Our hero in today's Gospel is a Samaritan...an outcast and disenfranchised person...someone to be avoided...especially with a potentially contagious skin condition. Like the Good Samaritan in last week's Parable...the real-life Samaritan in today's Gospel did the right thing...he thanked God for healing him.

When we find ourselves asking God to **please** help us...we must follow up with a **thank you**. Both are simple words...yet they are acts of faith...and powerful responses to God's love.

