

XIV TRINITY 2019

SERMON – SAINT JOSEPH PARISH

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GALATIANS 5.16 St. LUKE 17.11



Please and **thank you** are powerful words in any language. Our parents taught us to say “please” when we wanted something...and “thank you” when we got what we wanted.

We often say “please” when we ask God to do something for us or help us through a particularly difficult situation. We often begin our prayers with “please”. Do we sometimes forget to end our prayers with “thank you”?

Today’s Gospel is a “please” and “thank you” story about an encounter Jesus has with ten men who have some sort of skin disease. The word “leprosy” in the Gospel refers to any visible skin condition. We don’t know if it was actually Hansen’s Disease. But any visible skin condition was suspect...it could be contagious...so the ten men keep their distance from Jesus.

Like the Good Samaritan in last week’s Parable...the hero in today’s real-life story is a Samaritan. The other nine men were probably not Samaritans. Because all ten men had a dreaded skin disease...they would have been cut off from their families and friends and the communities in which they lived.

“**Please** help us”, the ten men shouted, “Make us well again”. Jesus spent much of his public ministry healing people...sometimes by touching them...sometime by remote control. Jesus tells the ten men to go to the Temple and do what the Book of Leviticus tells them to do...have a priest certify they were clean of any skin condition. On the way they were healed.

One would think all the men would be grateful to God for healing them and want to thank Jesus. But only one man came back to **thank** Jesus for healing him...and he is our hero, the Samaritan. He is so overcome with joy he falls down at Jesus’ feet and cries and thanks God for healing him. That one man is our hero, the Samaritan. He did the right thing...he came back to Jesus...he knew Jesus was the source of his healing.

Please and **thank you**...powerful words in any language. How do we respond to God’s gifts of healing in our own lives? More

importantly, how do we respond when things don’t go exactly the way we want them to go...when we don’t get an immediate answer to our prayers for healing? Do we give up...or are we persistent in our prayers? Jesus told the Samaritan to get up and go...his faith had made him whole.

Jesus wants us to be the Samaritan in the story...he wants us to show the same kind of deep visceral faith the Samaritan showed. He wants us first to ask God for help. He wants us to believe with our whole being God is a loving and compassionate father who doesn’t like seeing his children suffer. He wants our faith to be strong enough to see us through difficult times...even when we don’t get the answer we were hoping for. He wants us to learn how to thank God.

We are most likely to forget to thank God for his many blessings when things are going well. Those are the times we are taking God for granted. In the Collect we ask God to increase faith, hope and love in our lives, so we will always think and do what is right. We respond to the Collect by saying...*Amen...so be it*. We should add to our *Amen*...a loud *thank you*.

The simple act of saying thank you to God for his many blessings in our lives helps us understand we have the same relationship with him Jesus has...we are his children...he is our Abba...Papa...Dad...and parents love their children and want what’s best for them.

The Samaritan is our hero because he has faith. He has a sickness that cuts him off from everyone he knows and loves but never loses his faith. He trusts in God and believes Jesus has the power to make him well. 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**.

When we think about it...the Mass is a series of “please” and “thank you” prayers. The Mass is sometimes called the Eucharist...the Great Thanksgiving. It’s now time to say **thank you** to Jesus for what he has done for us...like the one who came back?

