

THAT THEY MAY BE SAVED

Leprosy, an infectious disease, is at the center of the liturgy of the Word today. To protect others against this infection, the Book of Leviticus orders the sick person to live outside the camp and inform others about his condition: "unclean, unclean" (Lev 13:45). Leprosy has also a symbolic meaning. Sin makes us spiritually unclean. What's more, sinful person infects others with their sin. We see that in the influence of social and philosophical currents that lead to the loss of truth and the decline of morality.

The story of healing the leper is part of the Galilean mission of Jesus. He left Capernaum to teach in other places (Mk 1:38), and he returns there after the events described in today's Gospel (Mark 2: 1). This mission was characterized by teaching in the synagogues and casting out demons (Mk 1:39) - unclean spirits (Mk 1: 23-25). The cleaning of Galilee from the power of evil is particularly highlighted in today's Gospel. "If you wish, you can make me clean" (Mk 1:40). The leper does not demand to be healed. He asks, falls on his knees, and leaves the decision to Jesus. We can learn a lot here about humility, surrender to God's will, and trust in Jesus. "I do will it. Be made clean" (Mk 1:41). Faith and mercy meet with each other and "the leprosy left him immediately" (Mk 1:42). However, this is not the end of the story.

"See that you tell no one anything" (Mk 1:44). His disobedience somehow thwarted Jesus' plans. Instead of entering openly into a city, the Savior resides in deserted places. He does not go throughout all Galilee anymore, instead people come to Him from all directions. What was the reason for this change? Jesus' ban not propagate that miracle had its reason. Proclaiming the Gospel is dangerous. Jesus' fame as a preacher and healer also attracted the attention of his opponents. Immediately after that healing, the clouds are slowly gathering over the mission of Christ. The scribes (Mk 2: 6-7) and the Pharisees (Mk 2:16) begin to look closely at His mission and soon the decision to destroy Jesus will be made (Mk 3: 6).

"Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ "(1 Cor 11: 1). Imitating Christ means not seeking one's own benefit, but the good of others, "that they may be saved" (1 Cor 10:33). By touching the leper Jesus did not seek his own benefit. On the contrary, He made himself unclean. Our Lord takes upon himself the infectious dis-

ease of sin so humankind can experience salvation. Saint Paul followed in the footsteps of the Lord. When proclaiming the Gospel, the apostle sought the good of all - Jews, Greeks and the Church of God. He knew perfectly well that only the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is able to cleanse the world and humanity from the contamination of sin. "Blessed is he whose fault is taken away, whose sin is covered." (Psalm 32: 1). Amen.