

## Commentary on the Readings for February 11, 2024

### The Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time

We all know the Golden Rule, "***Do unto others as you would want them to do unto you.***" Did you know that this comes from Holy Scripture? (See **Matthew 7:12 and Luke 6:31**) However, before Jesus' time, this was not the case. The culture at that time looked upon human disease and misfortune of all kinds as punishment from God for being a sinner - a real example of "the blind leading the blind." But have we progressed much from that primitive thinking? As we approach the holy season of Lent, the Readings will focus on sin and transgressions of all kinds that we are all guilty of, and what we should do to correct our ways.

The **First Reading** is from the ***Book of Leviticus (13:1-2, 44-46)***. We read here one of the basic Mosaic laws that was imposed on the Jewish people for health reasons, the separation of people with contagious diseases. There was nothing basically wrong with this concept originally; however, over time the practice and the understanding became a sign that God punished sinners with diseases, suffering, and leprosy which was the worst of all punishments, except for crucifixion.

The **Responsorial Psalm (32:1-2, 5, 11)** is a song that could and should be sung by a leper or a sinner who has been cured or forgiven. One is physical and the other is spiritual; but God is the "miracle worker" in both cases.

The **Second Reading** is from the ***First Letter of St Paul to the Corinthians (10:31-11:1)***. In this passage, Paul is exhorting his flock to be aware of the intent and purpose of all our actions. To avoid sin, or the appearance of sin, do everything for the "greater honor and glory of God." This is not as difficult as one might think. It requires some effort at the beginning, but becomes a natural mindset over time.

The **Gospel Reading** is taken from the ***Gospel of Mark (1:40-45)***. This gospel passage has two messages: The simple story of the leper cured by Jesus and the command by Jesus not to reveal the details to anyone. Here the leper comes to Jesus in desperation "begging" to be healed. Jesus does not shrink away as most Jews of that day would. Rather, Jesus heals the leper immediately, but then tells him not to reveal the details except to "show yourself to the priest as Moses prescribed." Jesus did not want sensational fame or notoriety; it hindered His mission. Rather, He wanted all mankind to come to Him out of faith and trust, but in the quiet of their heart.

When we need to be healed from a serious illness, we go to a doctor to have it diagnosed and look for the proper care to continue in good health. Should we then not go to a priest to have our sins forgiven and seek the proper penance? Remember, our sins are forgiven before we reach the confessional if we are sincere; but Jesus' command is still there, "Go show yourself to the priest." So, the question is: **How long has it been since you went to be reconciled with**

**Jesus by confessing your sins?** Something to think about during your prayer time this week!

***MFB***