

The Twenty Eighth Sunday after Pentecost
Luke 17:12-19

And as he entered into a certain village, there met him ten men that were lepers, which stood afar off: And they lifted up their voices, and said, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us. And when he saw them, he said unto them, Go shew yourselves unto the priests. And it came to pass, that, as they went, they were cleansed. And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God, And fell down on his face at his feet, giving him thanks: and he was a Samaritan. And Jesus answering said, Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine? There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger. And he said unto him, Arise, go thy way: thy faith hath made thee whole. (KJV)

The ten lepers in the present Gospel called Jesus their Master. The lepers desired mercy from Jesus. Jesus told the lepers to show themselves to the priests. They listened to Jesus and were cleansed.

At each Divine service believers pray to the Lord for mercy. All believers need of cleansing of personal sins. God is good and merciful. God hears the pleas for mercy. God is forgiving more than believers will ever know.

The Church provides the Holy Mysteries of Confession and Communion. Believers repenting of their sins receive forgiveness and experience renewal in Christ.

Ten lepers were cleansed. Only one leper returned to Jesus in thanksgiving. Only one of the cleansed lepers gloried God for being healed. This Gospel challenges believers to self-examination and to always give thanks to God.

Believers can never give God sufficient gratitude. Believers are protected and healed throughout life in ways known and unknown. Believers experience healing of soul and body when participating in Holy Confession, Communion and Unction.

God's goodness and mercy are beyond measure. God's goodness and mercy are beyond human comprehension. Appreciative believers take time to thank God. Appreciative believers glorify God in the ways they live.

Believers healed by God testify to that healing with their words and actions in daily life. Appreciative believers keep their hearts, minds and souls filled with gratitude to the good, merciful and loving God.

The Church has prayers of thanksgiving. Believers knowledgeable of the prayers utilize them fervently when healed. A person cannot travel the path of life from Baptism to the Heavenly Kingdom without being healed constantly.

The Church proclaims the present Gospel for believers to be grateful to God. Holy Apostle Paul said "In everything give thanks for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you." (I Thess.5:18)

The journey from birth to departure from earthly life is normally many decades. Persons experience physical illnesses. The heart, mind and soul are always faced with afflictions to take the person away from the life in Christ.

Believers face constant struggles to remain on the path to the Heavenly Kingdom and eternal life. Sins and afflictions to the soul occur regularly. Words are said, behaviors occur that impair functioning and need corrected.

Jesus is the healer in addition to being the goal of the believer. Jesus' healing powers enable the believer to be cleansed and released of sins. Jesus frees believers from the weight and burden of sins.

Strong faith includes being grateful for Jesus' healing actions. The cleansed and grateful leper's faith is an example for all believers. Only one of the ten lepers that were cleansed had the mind and grateful heart to say thank you.

The grateful leper fell before Jesus in gratitude. How often during our lives do we fall in gratitude to Jesus? Each time Jesus forgives us of sinful thoughts, words or actions, we are healed from the plague of sin.

When we recover from illnesses or accidents, do we fall before Jesus and say thank you? After surgery, do we take time to show gratitude to the Lord? Do our lives demonstrate that we are grateful for renewed life after having been healed?

Our churches should be filled every week with grateful believers benefitting from prayers offered in the church for their health and salvation. The Church offers prayers for the sick and the suffering every day. Believers around the world benefit from the Church's prayers.

The present Gospel enters deep into the attentive heart, mind and soul for serious consideration. Personal thoughts, words and actions reflect whether the believer is grateful to God.

While life is in the body, the person can show gratitude to God. Life comes from God and continues only by the will of God. The wise believer chooses to be like the grateful leper and not like the ungrateful nine.

Each day is an opportunity to thank God. Each day is lived only by the goodness and mercy of God. Even the ability to say thank you to God depends on God.

Life is more than making requests of God. A healthy life entails fully recognizing and appreciating God's part in health. To be healthy is to live in Christ free of the weight and illness of sin.

Jesus is the cleanser of sins and healer of heart, mind and soul. Faith keeps the believer focused on Christ. Vigilance keeps the believer united with Christ. Now is the time for gratitude to Christ. It is always the time for gratitude to Christ.

The Twenty Eighth Sunday after Pentecost. Holy Greatmartyr Barbara. Venerable John of Damascus. December 4/17, 2023. Hidden Valley, Pennsylvania.

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