

As we share this period of "Lent Time" we pray you discover a new awareness of God's Word and God's love and presence in your lives through these reflections.



Searching for Insights in the Gospel of Mark

1. Why does Mark emphasize that Jesus touched the leper before healing him?

2. There are people today who are still ostracized in our time like the leper of the biblical times. How can we as a church extend the hand of Jesus and touch and heal them today?

3. What are the untouchable areas of my own life that prevent me from approaching other people or turning to God? Do I believe that Jesus can extend his healing touch to me and raise me up from what keeps me from God?

We pray... Lord Jesus, as you healed the leper, you wished to bring all people from solitude to community. Help me to recognize the hidden parts of my life that need your compassionate touch and let me trust in the power of your presence and healing. Amen



Our Lady of the Fields Church
Scriptural Review & Reflections
Saturday & Sunday March 3 & 4, 2018

For more information on any of the parish Faith Enrichment programs contact the Evangelization and Faith Formation Office & Staff or Dr. Little at tlittle@olffparish.com

The Gospel of Jesus: God's Suffering Servant Mark1: 40-45

In biblical times, leprosy involved a wide variety of skin diseases and rendered a person ritually and socially "unclean" according to the Torah. A person with leprosy was not allowed in the Temple or in any social or religious gatherings, and, anyone who touched a person with leprosy was considered "unclean" as well. To be plagued with this illness was not just dangerous to a person's health. It also ostracized the person from participating in nearly every aspect of normal life. For all these reasons, the leper approached Jesus and implored him, "if you choose, you can make me clean."

The narrative reveals the strong emotions of Jesus in this matter, it states Jesus was "moved with pity" and emphasizes that he stretched out his hand and touched the leper. Jesus violates the law of purity to establish an immediate physical and social connection with the leper. In this we see the similarities between Jesus' action and his personal welcome of other outcasts, such as the tax collectors and sinners. Jesus directly responds to the man's uncertainty both about the man and about Jesus willingness to cure him.

Jesus' answer is especially important. "I do choose. Be made clean!" In contrast to those who feared becoming unclean by contact with a leper, the Lord's contact immediately frees him of his burden. The leprosy leaves him and he is clean. Against all the powers of evil, Jesus demonstrates his mission to touch and to make whole all those called to enter the kingdom of God, no matter what the cause for concern or hesitation. Then, honoring the Torah, He sends the man to verify his cure in conformity with God's law, so all the people can know that this is not merely a random cure but a sign that God's Messiah is among us.