



AMDG
28TH SUNDAY IN
ORDINARY TIME
YEAR C
13TH OCTOBER 2019



Give thanks to the Lord!

OPENING PRAYER

May your grace, O Lord, we pray,
at all times go before us and follow after
and make us always determined to carry out good works.

Longing for healing and expressing gratitude are threads that pull together all of the scripture we pray this Sunday.

In the *First Reading*, Naaman, commander of a foreign king's army, cannot use his power to escape the ravages of leprosy. Yet with a spirit of humility and hope-filled faith, he goes in search of healing from the God of Israel. Though not an Israelite, his life is transformed and changed forever by God's healing power.

The *Psalms* is a rapturous song of praise, expressing very much how we imagine Naaman might have felt after being healed.

St Paul, in the *Second Reading*, writes a letter of encouragement from his place of imprisonment, proclaiming that the good news of Jesus Christ risen from the dead cannot be chained up. Faith in Christ will bring us freedom from our hardships.

The physical healing of leprosy is also at the heart of the *Gospel* story, but we are encouraged to look deeper by reflecting on the questions that Jesus poses after ten people with leprosy are healed. It is only a Samaritan who returns to give thanks to Jesus. Perhaps even after being healed, he is no longer welcome in his fellow group of non-Samaritans? He remains a social pariah, but Jesus welcomes him and demonstrates that the spirit of God's healing love is for all people, not just the chosen few.

This week, let us be especially grateful that we belong to a community united in love and prayer – and let us pray for each other that we may be a source of God's healing to those who are rejected today.

FIRST READING 2 KINGS 5: 14–17

Naaman the leper went down and immersed himself seven times in the Jordan, as Elisha had told him to do. And his flesh became clean once more like the flesh of a little child.

Returning to Elisha with his whole escort, he went in and stood before him. “Now I know”, he said, “that there is no God in all the earth except in Israel. Now, please, accept a present from your servant.” But Elisha replied, “As the Lord lives, whom I serve, I will accept nothing.” Naaman pressed him to accept, but he refused. Then Naaman said, “Since your answer is ‘No’, allow your servant to be given as much earth as two mules may carry, because your servant will no longer offer holocaust or sacrifice to any god except the Lord.”

As I prepare to pray, I purposefully adopt a prayerful posture, and allow my body and mind to settle and slow down as best it can.

I look back over the last week with a spirit of gratitude. Where have I noticed the presence of God in my life? And where has it been harder to feel present to the Living Christ within me, and in those I meet?

I bring all of this to the Lord, trusting in his love for me.

I read through the scripture slowly, attentive to any thoughts, images or questions that come to mind.

I may choose to imagine what it would be like to have a disease or condition like Naaman, that would make me an outcast, and feared by society.

How would this feel?

Perhaps there are times when I have felt that I am an outsider, rejected or not accepted for who I am? Once more I explore my feelings and tell the Lord about them.

I imagine having the great faith of Naaman that compelled him to travel many miles in the hope of being healed. What do I myself long for?

With every one of my senses, I may wish to enter more deeply into this imaginative contemplation, and see myself plunging into the river seven times, and emerging renewed, cleansed.

With a childlike wonder and excitement that once more I will be accepted and welcomed into society, I express my gratitude to God.

I slowly pray ... *Glory be to the Father ...*

GOSPEL LUKE 17: 11-19

On the way to Jerusalem Jesus travelled along the border between Samaria and Galilee. As he entered one of the villages, ten lepers came to meet him. They stood some way off and called to him, “Jesus! Master! Take pity on us.”

When he saw them he said, “Go and show yourselves to the priests.” Now as they were going away they were cleansed. Finding himself cured, one of them turned back praising God at the top of his voice, and threw himself at the feet of Jesus and thanked him. The man was a Samaritan. This made Jesus say, “Were not all ten made clean? The other nine, where are they? It seems that no one has come back to give praise to God, except this foreigner.” And he said to the man, “Stand up and go on your way. Your faith has saved you.”

As in the *First Reading*, this Gospel passage allows us to spend time contemplating the themes of being an outcast, searching for healing and expressing gratitude.

How does this relate to the events of my own life?

With this in mind, I come before God just as I am, bringing him the parts of my life that desire healing, and the things that I am deeply grateful for.

I allow a few moments of stillness and silence before I slowly and prayerfully read the Gospel passage.

I use my imagination to let the scene come to life in my mind and body.

I see myself as part of the small group of lepers ... existing on the margins ... not even able to approach the ‘clean’.

What stirs within me when I notice Jesus drawing near? How do I respond?

I imagine being the Samaritan, despised even before people know of his leprosy. After I am healed, I place myself at Jesus’s feet, giving thanks. Now I hear Jesus calling me to stand up and go on my way.

What do I say to him?

Recalling my thoughts from the start of my prayer, I imagine Jesus looking upon me as I am today, bringing healing to my life, calling me to stand up and go.

How am I changed? Do I feel saved by my faith?

I bring my ponderings before Jesus, and share with him as I would with a dear friend.

I close my prayer saying *Our Father* ...

Here's a text if you've only got a minute ...

When the Lord appears, we shall be like him,
for we shall see him as he is.

Communion Antiphon

All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.
Shout to the Lord all the earth, ring out your joy.

Psalm

Your words are spirit, Lord and they are life:
you have the message of eternal life.

Gospel Acclamation

This week's texts if you want to reflect further

2 Kings 5: 14–17; Psalm 97 (98); 2 Timothy 2: 8–13; Luke 17: 11–19



‘The other nine, where are they ...?’



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