

**The Grateful Leper
(28th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C)**

2 Kings 5:14-17—The Healing of Naaman the Leper

1. Naaman: Gentile commander of the Syrian army; “he was a leper” (2 Kings 5:1)
And when the king of Israel read the letter, he rent his clothes and said, “*Am I God, to kill and to make alive, that this man sends word to me to cure a man of his leprosy?*” (2 Kings 5:7)
2. Elisha: Prophet of Israel: successor to Elijah (2 Kings 1-2)
3. Miracle: wash in the Jordan “seven times”; Naaman is healed (2 Kings 5:8-14)
4. New Elisha: Elisha’s 1 Leper vs. Jesus’ 10 Lepers!

Psalm 98—The Lord Has Revealed his Saving Power to the “Nations”

1. Gentiles: he has “revealed his vindication” to the “nations” (Hebrew *goyim*) (v. 3)

2 Timothy 2:8-13—Salvation in Christ Jesus

1. Salvation: is “in Christ Jesus”; for all those “elect” (2:10)

Luke 17:11-19—The Ten Lepers Healed

1. The Law of Leprosy:
“The *leper* who has the disease shall wear torn clothes and let the hair of his head hang loose, and *he shall cover his upper lip and cry, ‘Unclean, unclean.’* He shall remain unclean as long as he has the disease; he is unclean; *he shall dwell alone in a habitation outside the camp.* (Lev 13:45-46)
2. The Priests and Leprosy: detailed laws given in Torah (cf. Lev 13-14)
 - a. Cleansing: he is “brought” to “the priest” (14:2)
 - b. Examination: “priest” shall make an “examination” (14:3)
 - c. Sacrifice: two “clean birds”; one killed and the other set free (14:4)
 - d. Blood and Water: sprinkled “seven times” on the leper (14:6)
 - e. Pronouncement: the priest “shall pronounce him clean” (14:7)
 - f. Washing: leper shall “bathe himself in water” (14:8)
3. Miracle: notice *how* Jesus heals them
 - a. Command: “go show yourselves to the priests” (17:14)
 - b. Faith: “as they went they were healed” (17:14; cf. Luke 17:19)
4. Gratitude: “glorifies” God & “gives thanks” (Greek *eucharisteō*) to Jesus! (17:15)
5. Foreign: only this “foreigner” (Greek *allogenes*)?”
(cf. Josephus, *War* 5.193-94; Gadenz, p. 295, on the *Soreg* inscription)

The Living Tradition

Bruno of Segni (12th cent. A.D.): “They stood a long way off because no one in their condition dared come too close. We stand a long way off too while we continue to sin. To

be restored to health and cured of the leprosy of sin, we also must cry out: “Jesus, master, take pity on us.” That cry, however, must come not from our lips but from our heart, for the cry of the heart is louder: it pierces the heavens, rising up to the very throne of God.” (Bruno of Segni, *On Luke’s Gospel* 2.40; trans. E. Barnecut, p. 124)

Questions for Discussion and Reflection (28th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C)

1. What are the implications of the king of Israel’s question about “God” being able to heal leprosy for who Jesus is?

2. How is Jesus like a new Elisha?

3. Which of the lepers do you tend to identify with? The one who was grateful? Or the nine who did not return to give thanks?

For Further Study

1. Arthur A. Just, Jr. *Luke*. Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture, New Testament III. Downers Grove: IVP, 2003. Pp. 293-96
3. Pablo Gadenz. *The Gospel of Luke*. Catholic Commentary on Sacred Scripture. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2018. Pp. 291-92.