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Wednesday's Gospel: Faith and Gratitude

Gospel for Wednesday in the
32nd Week of Ordinary Time,
and commentary.

Gospel (*Lk 17:11-19*)

On the way to Jerusalem he was passing along between Samaria and Galilee. And as he entered a village, he was met by ten lepers, who stood at a distance and lifted up their voices and said, “Jesus, Master, have mercy on us.”

When he saw them he said to them, “Go and show yourselves to the priests.”

And as they went they were cleansed. Then one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, praising God with a loud voice; and he fell on his face at Jesus' feet, giving him thanks. Now he was a Samaritan.

Then said Jesus, "Were not ten cleansed? Where are the nine? Was no one found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?" And he said to him, "Rise and go your way; your faith has made you well."

Commentary

Jesus is traveling with his disciples on the way to Jerusalem and encounters ten lepers. They cry out to him from a distance because, according to the law of Moses, lepers had to live apart in order to prevent contagion.

By instructing them to go to a priest, which was provided for in the same law for those who have been cured of leprosy, our Lord indicates that they will be cured. We are told that only one of the ten returned to give thanks and glory to God. This person was a Samaritan, and Jews had no dealings with Samaritans (cf. *Jn* 4:9). We are not told anything about the other nine. But our Lord tells the one who returns that his faith has saved him.

Sometimes we too can be like those nine ungrateful lepers. Getting used to God's action in us, perhaps from childhood, can cause us to lose sight of the immensity of God's gifts. In contrast, some who have lived for a long time distant from God, often simply out of ignorance, upon discovering God's action in their life they are deeply moved and prostrate themselves internally before God to give thanks.

Let us ask our Lord to help us learn a lesson from the Samaritan leper. May we never stop being surprised by God mercy, marveling at his action in our life.

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