

# The Living Word

**Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year B**

**11 February 2024**

## **First Reading Lv 13:1-2. 44-46**

*As long as he is unclean, he must live alone, outside the camp.*

The Lord said to Moses and Aaron, 'If a swelling or scab or shiny spot appears on a man's skin, a case of leprosy of the skin is to be suspected. The man must be taken to Aaron, the priest, or to one of the priests who are his sons.

'The man is leprous: he is unclean. The priest must declare him unclean; he is suffering from leprosy of the head. A man infected with leprosy must wear his clothing torn and his hair disordered; he must shield his upper lip and cry, "Unclean, unclean". As long as the disease lasts he must be unclean; and therefore he must live apart: he must live outside the camp.'

## **Responsorial Psalm**

**Ps 31:1-2. 5. 11. R. v.7**

*(R.) I turn to you, Lord, in time of trouble, and you fill me with the joy of salvation.*

1. Happy the man whose offence is forgiven,  
whose sin is remitted.  
O happy the man to whom the Lord imputes no guilt,  
in whose spirit is no guile. (R.)

2. By now I have acknowledged my sins;  
my guilt I did not hide.  
I said: 'I will confess my offence to the Lord.'  
And you, Lord, have forgiven the guilt of my sin. (R.)
3. Rejoice, rejoice in the Lord,  
exult, you just!  
O come, ring out your joy,  
all you upright of heart. (R.)

## **Second Reading 1 Cor 10:31-11:1**

*Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ.*

Whatever you eat, whatever you drink, whatever you do at all, do it for the glory of God. Never do anything offensive to anyone – to Jew or Greeks or to the Church of God; just as I try to be helpful to everyone at all times, not anxious for my own advantage but for the advantage of everybody else, so that they may be saved.

Take me for your model, as I take Christ.

## **Gospel Acclamation Lk 7:16**

**Alleluia, alleluia!**

**A great prophet has appeared among us;**

**God has visited his people.**

**Alleluia!**



## Gospel Mk 1:40-45

*The leprosy left him and he was cured.*

A leper came to Jesus and pleaded on his knees: 'If you want to' he said 'you can cure me.' Feeling sorry for him, Jesus stretched out his hand and touched him. 'Of course I want to!' he said. 'Be cured!' And the leprosy left him at once and he was cured. Jesus immediately sent him away and sternly ordered him, 'Mind you say nothing to anyone, but go and show yourself to the priest, and make the offering for your healing prescribed by Moses as evidence of your recovery.' The man went away, but then started talking about it freely and telling the story everywhere, so that Jesus could no longer go openly into any town, but had to stay outside in places where nobody lived. Even so, people from all around would come to him.

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## Reflection by Dianne Bergant CSA

We know that we will all have to face some kind of suffering, and so we try to prepare ourselves for it. Yet when it comes, as prepared as we try to be, it can overtake us with such fury that we fall back defenceless. We look to others for support and assistance, and if we are fortunate, we find it. However, even in the most supportive of communities, suffering tends to alienate us from those who are healthy and secure. Suffering reminds us of our own finitude and the contingent nature of all of life. It threatens our sense of order.

Jesus is not deterred by human suffering. He welcomes all who approach him; his healing touch reincorporates those who have been ostracised; his loving embrace reassociates those who have been alienated. In the reign of God, there are no outsiders. All belong to Jesus, and, therefore, all belong to each other. When the one afflicted is embraced by the community, the community is an authentic manifestation of the inclusive reign of God.

In suffering we witness human vulnerability and our desperate need of each other and of God. There, at the edge of life and on the fringes of the community, we may experience the tenderness and compassion of God. The loving touch of Christ that can heal our souls, if not our bodies. It is there that we may most authentically participate in the cross of Christ. Joined to him we are anything but unproductive or worthless.