

Daily Homily
St. Martin of Tours
Memorial
32 Week, Ordinary Time, Wednesday
11 November 2020
[USCCB Daily Readings](#)

This Gospel is usually the one we read on Thanksgiving Day. For obvious reasons, "...he (the leper) fell at the feet of Jesus and thanked him."

However, what struck me from the Gospel today was not so much the leper's reaction to his healing but rather how the healing came about.

Jesus seemed to be blowing them off ... side stepping them ... sending them away. Even before social distancing was a thing, these lepers, "from a distance" are asking Jesus for pity. His response at first glance is "go away." But, of course, not just "go away," but go away with a purpose: "Go show yourselves to the priests." Those who were healed of this malady, this skin disease like leprosy would first have to get their approval of the priests of the temple before being reintegrated into the community.

Jesus did not say to them, "I heal you" or "You are cured." So as they walk away from him, expecting pity, they must be thinking to themselves, "What good is this going to do for us, a group of lepers, if we show up on the front doorstep of the priests?" Some of them, must have thought this was a waste of time. Some of them may have been so cynical that they were simply going to leave their group and go back to quarantine – nothing gained, nothing lost. They would remain in their illness and isolation.

With each step, the healing must have happened and the disease must have cleared up. So that when they did arrive at the priests' door, they were brand new. I wonder if it was the most cynical of them all who returned to Jesus. I wonder if it was the one who took the most convincing to stay and carry out the request who then went back to say thank you.

What does this say to me, what does this say to us ... even in the midst of sickness whether it is this pandemic, the McCarrick report the Vatican released yesterday, the things that plague our family, the addictions that interrupt lives, the illness of sin that casts a shadow over each of us ... even in this illness, listen to Jesus. If he tells you to do something, it is never for nothing. It is never a matter of "what good is this going to do?" Listen to him, trust him a sense of healing and wholeness is on the way... maybe not immediately and instantaneously, but rather step by step, healing is on the way.