

Rectoría de San Juan de Dios
VI Sunday of Ordinary Time-Cycle B
Lev 13, 1-2.44-46; Ps 32; 1 Cor 10, 31-11, 1; Mk 1, 40-45
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Let Us Overcome Our Limits

What Jesus accomplishes today is not just a simple healing. Behind His gestures and words is the salvific act of God. Jesus not only heals; He is not only a healer, but the Savior. Today Jesus dares to break down the barrier between God and human impurity, not denying evil and its negativity, but to show that His mission is to make the love of God real, that it is greater than any evil.

Lepers were social outcasts; considered to be suffering this evil as a punishment from God, they were condemned to living outside the cities. They were not permitted to set foot in the holy city of Jerusalem. They had to dress in torn garments with their heads uncovered and keep their distance from others, shouting, as we hear in the first reading, “Unclean! Unclean!”

Nevertheless, something happened in that leper that led him to violate the law and overcome both the limits of social marginalization to which he was subjected and his awareness of his own exclusion. He approached Jesus with humility, with the certainty that that prophet-healer, Jesus of Nazareth, was God; he made a confession of faith using the words that the people used to petition God (Wisdom 12, 18). It was a saying of the people: “If you want to, you can.” This is saying to God, “I know that if You can do great things, you can do small ones.”

Jesus also violates the law; as Mark says, He dares to touch him, “*Moved with pity,*” as only God is moved to the core by love. The result is that Jesus is touched in the deepest part of His being, where decisions that involve all of life are made; He carries out His mission.

It is important for us today as well to overcome the limits of pure and impure when we live in a society with new limits that condemn the human person, marginalizing him and excluding him from the community. The new “impure” could be those with AIDS, the elderly, the indigenous, migrants, etc, but also those in the family or our world of relationships who are marginalized.

We want to act in favor of suffering humanity, just as Jesus did, overcoming our limits; let us follow these three ideas:

1-Let us understand about blemishes.

To know who deserves exclusion and who does not. In the time of Jesus, this was not well differentiated and many were treated as lepers when they were not. This happens today when we judge and categorize others only according to our own criteria, and so fall into the error of marginalizing and excluding them.

Only one who knows about putrefaction and impurity or who has the sensitivity to perceive them, only one who knows about faults or who has experienced exclusion could come close to understanding the leprosy of today as Jesus understood it two thousand years ago.

When one understands this suffering and broadens his perspective, not because of false mercy or permissiveness toward those who have failed, but because of an authentic evaluation from love, he is overcoming the

limits of prejudice and is finding what Jesus finds behind all fallen brothers: their dignity as the handiwork of God.

2- Let us care about the perspective of others.

When one overcomes his limits, he can scandalize a few people. Paul invites us to be attentive to the progress of the comprehension of the faith in others so as not to scandalize them. What for us might not be sinful may appear to be so to others. In such a case, it is better to take care for the spiritual well-being of others. We do not go beyond or overcome the limits that marginalize in an arbitrary or unilateral way, but in an authenticated and well-considered manner, especially when other persons are going to be affected.

3-Let us dare contamination.

Because the absolute value of a man is not sickness, culture, or condition, but his being a person loved by God, we must dare even contamination.

Let us imagine the countenance of those who saw Jesus touch the leper, overcoming all fear. At times fear paralyzes us and prevents us from being fully ourselves. A false limit that social conditions have imposed or that we ourselves have set kills our possibility for hands-on loving, that is, in charity; it kills our capacity for forgiveness, accompaniment, mercy...

When Jesus says to the leper: *“Yes, I want to, be healed!”* He says it from the depths of His love, and of the love of God. This is perfectly possible for us.

The leper presented himself before the priest (according to Lev 13-14) so that the priest could declare him clean or, in other words, could present him to the community

so that all would know that he was no longer to be excluded. But the superior value here is something as much or more important than the healing: salvation.

Let us hope that this week we seriously consider the possibility of taking action in overcoming limits that no longer work, that don't serve the Gospel that Christ gave us. Because the world needs to be healed, liberated, and saved, let us bypass our limits of marginalization or let us defeat them outright where it is necessary. Then we will understand each other better in our relationship with Jesus.