

Daily Reflections



COMPASSION

By Sister Jayne Helmlinger, CSJ

An Excerpt from Today's Gospel

It happened that there was a man full of leprosy in one of the towns where Jesus was; and when he saw Jesus, he fell prostrate, pleaded with him, and said, "Lord, if you wish, you can make me clean." Jesus stretched out his hand, touched him, and said, "I do will it. Be made clean." And the leprosy left him immediately.

LUKE 5:12-13

Reflection

This passage from Luke never fails to move me because Jesus is speaking directly to this man, an outcast in his own homeland because of his leprosy. I can only imagine the suffering of this man and how he must have longed for companionship, friendship and love. I can't say I've ever felt this type of extreme ostracism, though my hunch is that all of us, at one time or another, have experienced a sense of isolation and distance from those we love and who love us. We can include our relationship with the Beloved as well, if we recall the desert times, the "dark night of the soul" times in our lives as

so eloquently written about by St. John of the Cross. Sometimes we can feel quite distant from God.

I'm also taken by this man's courage, faith, and trust in Jesus' power to heal him. Do you and I have this type of trust in God? Do we turn to God in faith, hope, courage, and love when we are struggling for healing in body, mind, or spirit? Deep down, do we believe God hears us? God loves us?

If any of you who are reading this reflection are facing hardships right now, allow these words from Jesus to touch your heart: "I do will it" – meaning, Jesus wants to comfort and heal us. Jesus remains present to us and is not afraid of our brokenness or our emotions. God's mercy restores us and gives us the courage to continue on our journey in life.

We can also look at this reading and ask ourselves, what is our leprosy? While we might not be suffering from a physical illness, we might be holding on to shame, fear of being judged, wounds that still need healing, or feelings of unworthiness. In times of distress, we might falter in our belief that God wants to heal us. God is present to us. God is our source of all being. Jesus wills our healing. Jesus wills our connection with others. Jesus wills our new life in Him.

My hope is that we all continue to pray in faith, that like the man with leprosy, we can approach God and say, "if You wish, you can make us clean." Jesus' response is always, "I do will it. Amen."



Sr. Jayne

Image created by Sister Jayne Helmlinger, CSJ

For Pondering

- What is your leprosy? How have you sought the love and healing of Jesus when you experience these times of “leprosy?”
 - How might you be a loving presence in the life of someone who might be feeling alienated from others? Might you be God’s conduit of love and compassion this day?
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For Prayer

*O loving, compassionate God,
may we be instruments of healing and compassion
as we move through this day.*

*Let us be beacons of light for those struggling in the darkness of life.
May your grace embolden our hearts to notice and respond
to those suffering from loneliness, illness, or neglect.
Let us walk humbly and courageously with you, O God.
Amen.*

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