

6TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME INTRODUCTION TO THE LITURGY OF THE DAY! FIRST READING: Leviticus 13:1 - 2, 44 - 46

According to the law of Moses, people with leprosy had to live alone, outside the camp. Aaron or another priest declared them unclean as long as they had a disease.

SECOND READING: 1 Corinthians 10:31 - 11:1

Paul wrote to the Corinthians, "Do everything for the glory of God. Avoid giving offense, whether to the Jews or Greeks or the church of God ... Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ."

GOSPEL READING: Mark 1:40 - 45

A leper said to Jesus, "If you wish, you can make me clean." Moved with pity, Jesus touched him: "I do will it. Be made clean." The leprosy left him, and he was healed.

Both the first reading and the Gospel deal with the illness of leprosy, not exactly the subject we hoped to hear about on Valentine's Day. In Moses' day, leprosy was a sign of sinfulness and separation from God. But in the Gospel, Jesus, the Son of God, reaches out and touches the leper. The leper is literally not separated from God at all. Not even leprosy is a barrier to Jesus' healing touch. As members of the body of Christ, it is now up to us to break through those barriers. Listening to the word of God, let us take Paul's words as a challenge: "Be imitators of me as I am of Christ."

MASS INTENTIONS

Saturday Mass (Sunday Observance):

5:00 PM: Birthday blessings and God's guidance for Maria Placid Joyeaux rb Matthew Placid.

Sunday Masses:

7:30 AM: Ruthine Johnson (*deceased*) rb Her husband, Thomas Johnson.

10:00 AM: Birthday blessings for Bonnie President rb Her family.

5:00 PM: God's continuous blessings for the Haitian community.

Daily Masses:

Tues. Feb. 16, 7:00 AM: St. Onesimus In honor of the Holy Face of Jesus rb Carolyn Peternel.

- Wed. Feb. 17, 7:00 AM: Seven Founders of the Order of Servites Kathleen Farro (*deceased*) rb Estelle Farro.
- Thurs. Feb. 18, 7:00 AM: Blessed Elisabetta Canori-Mora Birthday blessings for Mark Charles rb His family.

Fri. Feb. 19, 5:00 PM: St. Barbatus Birthday blessings for Doreen Silvia rb Doreen Silvia.



ANNOUNCEMENTS



ETERNAL CANDLE: This week the Eternal Candle is burning for deceased Ruthine Johnson, requested by her husband, Thomas Johnson. You can request the Eternal Candle for your loved ones' birthdays or any special occasions.

ORDINATION OF REV. NEIL SCANTLEBURY: The Most Rev. Charles Jason Gordon, Apostolic Administrator, Diocese of Bridgetown, said after due consultation with key persons, including Bishop-elect Scantlebury, and His Excellency Archbishop Fortunatus Nwachukwu, Apostolic Nuncio to the Antilles Episcopal Conference, it has been agreed that the ordination be postponed due to the COVID 19 situation in Barbados. A new date will be announced in due course. Please continue to pray for Bishop-elect Scantlebury as he prepares for his ordination.

OFFICE CLOSED: Please note that the church office will be closed ALL day on Monday, January 15, 2021, in observance of Presidents Day. Please be guided accordingly.

ST. JOSEPH WORKERS' MEETING: Members of St. Joseph Workers are reminded to attend your next meeting this *Sunday, February* 14, 2021, after the 7:30 a.m. mass. Please be guided accordingly.

LENT IS CLOSER THAN YOU THINK: Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, *February 17, 2021*. Now is the time to plan spiritual and corporal works of mercy for Lent. There will be two masses on Ash Wednesday: 7:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. Please be guided accordingly.

LENT: *During Lent*:

- 1. Holy Hour and Stations of the Cross are on Fridays at 6:00 p.m.
- 2. Those 18 to 59 years of age are to fast on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. 3. Those 14 years and older are to abstain from eating meat on Ash Wednesday and all Fridays in Lent
- 4. Pray for peace in the world and in our families.
- 5. Pray for God's blessings and protection against the attacks of evil spirits for our parish and our diocese.
- 6. There will be NO altar flowers. NO Gloria. NO Alleluia and NO recessional hvmn.
- 7. We are encouraged to make a good Confession.

JOB OPENING: The Diocese of St. Thomas is advertising a job position for a Physical Plant Manager. The applicant must be skilled in plumbing, electrical repairs, masonry and carpentry.

Housing will be provided and salary is negotiable. Interested persons are kindly asked to contact Rev. Msgr. Jerome Feudjio at Sts. Peter & Paul Cathedral at 340-774-0201 or Holy Family church at 340-775-1650.



PROTECTION OF CHILDREN

The Diocese of St. Thomas in the Virgin Islands is committed to protecting children from all harm. If you have knowledge of any member of the clergy or other church worker who may have abused a minor, please contact the diocesan child protection coordinator, Callista Julien at 340-772-4214.

Meditation: Do you seek the Lord Every week the report on stewardship will in-Jesus with expectant faith? No one clude our gifts of time, talent, and treasure. In who sought Jesus out was refused his gratitude to God, we give of our first fruits to help. Even the untouchables and the help fulfill God's mission of love here on earth. outcasts of Jewish society found help in him. Unlike the people of Jesus' time Attendance: Last Weekend: 284 who fled at the sight of a leper, Jesus Last Weekend's collections touched the leper who approached FIRST COLLECTION: <u>\$3,603.40</u> him and he made him whole and clean. Why was this so remarkable? Thank you for your weekly contribution. Lepers were outcasts of society. We pray God's continued blessings upon They were driven from their homes you and your family. Once again, thank and communities and left to fend for vou for your generosity. themselves. Their physical condition was terrible as they slowly lost the use of their limbs and withered away. They were not only shunned but regarded as "already dead" even by their relatives. LITURGY AND WORD CONT'D The Jewish law forbade anyone from touching or approaching a leper, lest are clean to the clean' (Titus 1:15). ritual defilement occur. Because the filth that is in one person

This leper did something quite remarkable. He approached Jesus confidently and humbly, expecting that Jesus could and would heal him. Normally a leper would be stoned or at least warded off if he tried to come near a rabbi. Jesus not only grants the man his request, but he demonstrates the personal love, compassion, and tenderness of God in his physical touch. The medical knowledge of his day would have regarded such contact as grave risk for incurring infection. Jesus met the man's misery with compassion and tender kindness. He communicated the love and mercy of God in a sign that spoke more eloquently than words. He touched the man and made him clean - not only physically but spiritually as well.

How do you approach those who are "Lord Jesus, inflame my heart with difficult to love, or who are shunned vour love and make me clean and by others because they are deformed or whole in body, mind, and spirit. May I have some defect? Do you show them never doubt your love nor cease to tell kindness and offer them mercy and others of your mercy and compassion." help as Jesus did? The Lord is always ready to show us his mercy and to free us from whatever makes us unclean, unapproachable, or unloving towards others.

Why did Jesus touch the leper, by Origen of Alexandria (185-254 AD)

"And why did [Jesus] touch him. since the law forbade the touching of a leper? He touched him to show that 'all things

LITURGY AND WORD

STEWARDSHIP OF TREASURE

does not adhere to others, nor does external uncleanness defile the clean of heart. So he touches him in his untouchability, that he might instruct us in humility; that he might teach us that we should despise no one, or abhor them, or regard them as pitiable, because of some wound of their body or some blemish for which they might be called to render an account... So, stretching forth his hand to touch, the leprosy immediately departs. The hand of the Lord is found to have touched not a leper, but a body made clean! Let us consider here, beloved, if there be anyone here that has the taint of leprosy in his soul, or the contamination of guilt in his heart? If he has, instantly adoring God, let him say: 'Lord, if you will, you can make me clean."" (excerpt from FRAGMENTS ON MATTHEW 2.2-3)

