

6TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME [B], 2018

FEBRUARY 11, 2018

QUEEN OF PEACE CATHOLIC ACADEMY

GAINESVILLE, FLORIDA

Rev. Jeff McGowan

1ST READING: LEVITICUS 13:1-2, 44-46

As long as the sore is on him he shall declare himself unclean, since in he is in fact unclean. He shall dwell apart, making his abode outside the camp.

PSALM 32

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

2ND READING: 1 CORINTHIANS 10; 31-11-1

Do everything for the glory of God.

GOSPEL: MARK 1:40-45

"I do will it, be made clean."

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There's just no way I am capable of expressing the powerful movement in this Gospel. There is the kneeling and pleading of the leper. This is a man with a highly contagious incurable disease. He was ostracized by his family, friends, neighbors, his entire society. He wasn't allowed to enter a town or city. If he saw anyone coming toward him he had to yell "unclean." People were afraid to go near him and when he knelt before Jesus he was pleading in utter desperation and taking a chance because people could have started to throw stones. And the leper's desperation is echoed in the passion with which Jesus responds. Jesus was raised with the same fears as everybody else. Even though he was a kind man, he could not be expected to go anywhere near this leper. He could have healed the man at a distance just in case. But, Jesus reached out and touched the leper; that took guts. And of course, there's this other thing, ultimately, Jesus experienced the same distancing from his Apostles, Disciples, friend. He was left alone, beaten until he was also

disfigured and killed and then he rose from that grave and continues to invite us to rise up with him.

This Gospel seems to express the desperation of someone who has been totally abandoned by his society and who does not seem to matter to the society anymore. It also seems to express the compassionate judgment of God in vindication of such persons. We are all here to pray. Most of us have a bounce in our step and we are grateful. But some are here pleading, maybe desperately, and we join our prayers to theirs. We know that with God every answer ultimately leads to good news.

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This weekend in every church in the diocese our good bishop is appealing for our donations to support his vision for our diocese. He really is a bishop who visits every corner of the diocese. He was at St. Francis Catholic Academy and also mingling at a small gathering of parishioners of the Gainesville parishes this week. We are always positive, please help him directly through this appeal if you are able.

[PLAY VIDEO]