

## Thursday 13 January 2022

Today is Thursday the 13 January, in the first week of Ordinary Time.

Jeremy Riddle sings, 'Draw Near. As you listen, imagine Jesus drawing near to you...

Today's reading is from the Gospel of Mark.

Mark 1:40-45

A leper came to him begging him, and kneeling he said to him, 'If you choose, you can make me clean.' Moved with pity, Jesus stretched out his hand and touched him, and said to him, 'I do choose. Be made clean!' Immediately the leprosy left him, and he was made clean. After sternly warning him he sent him away at once, saying to him, 'See that you say nothing to anyone; but go, show yourself to the priest, and offer for your cleansing what Moses commanded, as a testimony to them.' But he went out and began to proclaim it freely, and to spread the word, so that Jesus could no longer go into a town openly, but stayed out in the country; and people came to him from every quarter.

In this passage, we witness an encounter that should not have happened. Lepers were not meant to approach other people. People were not meant to touch lepers. At the time of Jesus, this was the way it was. How do you feel about this? Do you imagine society is like this now? Have you been in a situation where you have felt this?

There is a great sense of trust in the leper's request. Faith that Jesus could work this healing, and acceptance that whatever happened would be God's will. "I do choose. Be made clean". What does this exchange tell you about the leper's convictions and feelings, as well as those of Jesus? Have you seen this pattern in your own prayers of petition?

As you listen to the passage again, consider how Jesus' compassion reaches out to the marginalised in society. Notice how the healing has restored the man, not only to physical health, but to full unity with his community again.

Where do you need this compassion in your life?

Are there places or times when you could show this compassion to others?

Ask the Lord of healing to guide your prayer.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

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