Preaching Mission: Homily Helps

October 13, 2019
28th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Healed – and saved – through faith and gratitude

Reflections on the readings for the 28th Sunday in Ordinary Time (October 13, 2019): 2 Kings 5:14-17; Psalm 96:1, 2-3, 3-4; 2 Timothy 2:8-13; Luke 17:11-19

The Gospel for this Sunday recounts one of Jesus’ best-known miracles, the cleansing of 10 lepers. Christ and His disciples were heading toward Jerusalem for the last time when He met these suffering outcasts. They begged Him to take pity on them. He told them to show themselves to the priests who could declare that they were no longer unclean. On the way, they were healed and one – a Samaritan – was so filled with gratitude that he rushed back to praise God and thank Jesus. But our Lord had a question. “‘Ten were cleansed, were they not? Where are the other nine? Has none but this foreigner returned to give thanks to God?’ Then He said to him, ‘Stand up and go; your faith has saved you’” (Luke 17:17-19). It’s easy to think of excuses why the other nine kept going. After all, they were told to report to the priests. Maybe they were so excited to be well they wanted to see their families and resume their old lives. They were probably appreciative in a general way. But, the truth is, they were thinking of themselves and not the one who gave them this immense blessing.

The only former leper who returned knew Jesus was responsible for the gift of healing that had changed his life. He simply could not contain himself until he had returned to see Christ once more. In the process he was transformed by the very thanksgiving that filled him. Not only was the man’s body well, so was his soul. His gratitude and faith were bonded, as ours should be. God gives us everything. We proclaim our belief in Him and, indeed, often pray for His blessings and help for loved ones and ourselves. This is as it should be. However, most of us spend far more time asking than in thanking and praising. If we truly believe in God’s mercy and appreciate all He does for us, why don’t we say so? First, to Him, of course, but we can also let others know. If someone has given us a great gift, we usually can’t stop talking about it. Communicating our faith in Christ with others is one sure way of giving thanks. And letting those around us see that God’s love is real in us can make it more real for them as well.

As we continue this Extraordinary Missionary Month, let us give thanks for our faith, as we pray for those sharing the Good News of the Gospel with our brothers and sisters around the world.

For more about the Extraordinary Missionary Month and related resources, visit this website.
For resources for the celebration of World Mission Sunday, visit this website.