

FEBRUARY 14, 2021  
Sunday of the 6<sup>th</sup> Week in OT  
Mark 1: 40-45

“HEALING TOUCH OF JESUS.”

“There is a story about a New York City policeman investigating a case. Dialing a phone number on Day One of the investigation, he somehow knew before he had even finished that he’d made a mistake. The phone rang once, twice – then someone picked it up. “You’ve got the wrong number!” a husky male voice snapped before the line went dead. Mystified, the policeman hit redial. “I said you got the wrong number!” came the voice. Once more the phone clicked down. “How could he possibly know I had the wrong number?” the policeman asked himself. A cop is trained to be curious and concerned. So, he dialed a third time. “Hey, c’mon,” the voice said. “Is this you again?” “Yea, it’s me. I was wondering how you knew I had the wrong number before I even said anything.” “You figure it out!” The phone slammed down. He sat there for a while, the receiver hanging loosely in his fingers. He called the man back. “Did you figure it out yet?” the man asked. “The only thing I can think of is nobody ever calls you.” “You got it!” The phone went dead for the fourth time. Chuckling, the officer dialed the man back. “What do you want now?” asked the man. “I thought I’d call – just to say hello.” “Hello? Why?” “Well, if nobody ever calls you, I thought maybe I should.” There may be nobody else in this world that is moved with compassion enough to reach out to you. There are lepers all around us who live isolated lives. And sometimes the only one we have to rely on is God Himself — God Who dials our number and says, “I thought I’d call – just to say hello,” God, Who brings joy to the sorrowful, peace to the troubled and healing to the lepers, God, who embraces the lonely in the shadow of His wings, Who fills the empty, and Who guides those who are without hope.”<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> [www.stories4homilies.co](http://www.stories4homilies.co)

My brothers and sisters, God is so loving and compassionate. He is always willing to embrace our infirmities, deformities, and our sinfulness. He just wants to touch us and be healed. Our gospel is a very touching picture of God's love and embrace. The leper approached, begged, and knelt to Jesus, and said: "If you choose, you can make me clean."<sup>2</sup> And for Jesus, how He can refuse that kind of gestures – a loving, humble request and submission from a person who was nothing, rejected and even unloved by those people around him. Jesus stretched out His hands and touched him and everything went well. How powerful God is and may Jesus' words and touch be our inspiration to believe, trust and submit our own infirmities to Him, and at the same time stretch out and touch others, too.

My brothers and sisters, we sometimes "reduce others to lepers: those we fear, those who don't fit our image of sophistication and culture, those whose religion or race or class or culture threaten our own. We exile these lepers to the margins of society outside our gates; we reduce these lepers to simple stereotypes and demeaning labels; we reject these lepers as too unclean to be part of our lives and our world. The Christ who healed lepers comes to perform a much greater miracle – to heal us of our debilitating sense of self that fails to realize the sacred dignity of those we demean as lepers. The leper's challenge is addressed to all of us, who seek to imitate Jesus. We possess the means and abilities to transform our lives and world – what is required are the desire, the will, the determination to do so: to heal the broken, to restore lepers to wholeness, to reconcile with those from whom we are estranged."<sup>3</sup>

My brothers and sisters, let us embrace those who need our compassion and understanding. Let us be instruments of healing through our love and forgiveness. Jesus is calling us to be the channel of miracles of charity and mirror of the gospel that He

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<sup>2</sup> Mark 1: 40 NRSV Catholic Bible Press USA

<sup>3</sup> [www.stories4homilies.co](http://www.stories4homilies.co)

proclaimed and still proclaiming. Let us take care and have a loving concern to those people considered by the society as lepers, outcasted and rejected.

This coming Wednesday, we will begin the Season of Lent as we celebrate Ash Wednesday. We are being reminded that we are dust and to dust we shall return. This Lent, we need to practice three things: Fasting, Prayer and Almsgiving. Let us do what Jesus did to the leper: listen, embrace, touch, spread our love to strangers and those in need. Listen and understand you wife, husband, and your children. Embrace them tightly as if that will be the last. When we are patient, we understand; when we are forgiving, we open new relationships; and when we love, nothing is impossible. My brothers and sisters, there are many abandoned and lonely people around us. Let us reach out to them, let us take the kind of move that Jesus took towards the leper. When we touch other people and they feel our compassionate presence, they will experience the same kind of transformation as the leper did in today's gospel. So, the Lord is sending us to touch, love and show compassion to others.

Let this be our prayer: "Lord Jesus Christ, stir up and inflame my heart with Your mercy, compassion, and love. Make me clean and whole in body, mind, and spirit. Use me as Your instruments to touch other's life through my kind words and actions, and may I never lose hope, doubt nor cease to tell others of Your healing mercy and kindness. Amen."