**If you wish, you can make me clean**

**THURSDAY JANUARY 14 (Mk 1,40-45)**

In Jesus’ time period the condition of a leper was to be totally abandoned to themselves. It was applied with rigor as prescribed by the law: *"The one who bears the sore of leprosy shall keep his garments rent and his head bare, and shall muffle his beard; he shall cry out, 'Unclean, unclean!' As long as the sore is on him he shall declare himself unclean, since he is in fact unclean. He shall dwell apart, making his abode outside the camp. (Lev 13,45-46).* And yet this expulsion from the community was considered a very high act of charity: done in order not to infect the other people. In the Old Testament, up to the year one thousand before Christ Jesus, the community was protected from both physical and spiritual evil with distancing and even physical elimination. Thus the Deuteronomy: *"If an unjust witness takes the stand against a man to accuse him of a defection from the law, the two parties in the dispute shall appear before the LORD in the presence of the priests or judges in office at that time; and if after a thorough investigation the judges find that the witness is a false witness and has accused his kinsman falsely, you shall do to him as he planned to do to his kinsman. Thus shall you purge the evil from your midst. The rest, on hearing of it, shall fear, and never again do a thing so evil among you. (Dt 19,16-20). But if this charge is true, and evidence of the girl's virginity is not found, they shall bring the girl to the entrance of her father's house and there her townsmen shall stone her to death, because she committed a crime against Israel by her unchasteness in her father's house. Thus shall you purge the evil from your midst. (Dt 22,20).* With the advent of the prophets, the Lord promised his forgiveness to those who in conversion and in true repentance returned to him, returning to the Law of the Covenant with full obedience.

The Apostle Paul applies the law of Deuteronomy to the immoral people present in the community. The estrangement is temporary, in view of their repentance: *I wrote you in my letter not to associate with immoral people, not at all referring to the immoral of this world or the greedy and robbers or idolaters; for you would then have to leave the world. But I now write to you not to associate with anyone named a brother, if he is immoral, greedy, an idolater, a slanderer, a drunkard, or a robber, not even to eat with such a person. For why should I be judging outsiders? Is it not your business to judge those within? God will judge those outside. "Purge the evil person from your midst." (1Cor 5,9-13).* In truth, today the community no longer protects itself in its purity of truth and morals. We no longer want any distinction between those who are morally pure and those who are not, between those who walk in sound doctrine and holiness of the faith and those who sail in darkness. We are all the same. This is now the modern doctrine that governs hearts and minds. Everything must remain indistinct, confused, indeterminate. These are times of great evangelical darkness.

*A leper came to him (and kneeling down) begged him and said, "If you wish, you can make me clean. "Moved with pity, he stretched out his hand, touched him, and said to him, "I do will it. Be made clean." The leprosy left him immediately, and he was made clean. Then, warning him sternly, he dismissed him at once. Then he said to him, "See that you tell no one anything, but go, show yourself to the priest and offer for your cleansing what Moses prescribed; that will be proof for them." The man went away and began to publicize the whole matter. He spread the report abroad so that it was impossible for Jesus to enter a town openly. He remained outside in deserted places, and people kept coming to him from everywhere.*

The leper presents himself to Jesus with great humility. He puts himself entirely in His will. He asks for the miracle. He knows that Jesus can heal him. However, if he has other words of the Father to obey, he will welcome all his decisions. This leper can be called “image of Christ Jesus.” Jesus also asks the Father to be freed from the chalice of the cross but giving himself all in his will: "*Your will be done and not mine.*" Prayer is a request for grace, but also consignment to the divine will. It is fair to ask: why does the healed leper not obey the rules of silence given to him by Jesus? He doesn’t obey because he can’t hold back his joy.

Mother of the Redemption, Angels, Saints, let us evangelize with our joy.