

I was the riverfront walk near the Renaissance Center the other day. Stopped to lounge on the summer furniture now available for our use. I leaned way back and looked up to the sky; magnificent! Not a cloud in the sky.

I listened to the people who were passing by.

- All languages**
- All colors**
- All cultures**
- All kinds of music**

I gave praise and thanks to God for ALL of it.

So often with the busyness of life, we simply forget to give thanks to God and be grateful.

Every breath we take is a blessing and gift. But we get so preoccupied with things; with our health, with our relationships that we forget all is gift, EVERYTHING IS GIFT!

That reminded me of today's gospel story, Jesus is traveling someplace between Samaria, an unfriendly land filled with foreigners, and Jerusalem, a place which is the spiritual and political center of Israel. He is on his way, scripture says, to Jerusalem where he will suffer, die and rise. Jesus is simply not afraid of anything or anyone. All are part of his Father's beautiful creation. (An aside about the pope being interviewed by an atheist, sending messages to the sick, being concerned about gays and those in orphanages)

As Jesus approaches a village, ten lepers call out to him. They are physically afflicted with a skin disease. They are also socially shut out. They cannot enter the village and be with their family and friends. They cannot even approach the Lord. They can simply call out, "Jesus, master, have pity on us."

Then scripture simply says, “When he saw them, he told them to go and show themselves to the priests. The reason for going to the priests is so that they can be cleared to rejoin their family and friends.

Notice, unlike other stories of healing, he does not heal them directly. There is no focus on his divine power to heal. Jesus does not get into a big discussion with the Pharisees about whether one can heal on the Sabbath. The healing takes place off stage. We are simply told, “as they went off, they were cleansed.” Then just one returns to thank Jesus. This man is a foreigner. And Jesus asks the damning question, “Where are the other nine? Have none but this man returned to give thanks to God?”

Of course, this story is not simply about ten lepers in the time of Jesus.

Is not only about what Jesus wanted to teach his disciples.

This story is about US;

- it is about how we act
- how we make choices
- What we consider important

(Pause)

Let me ask you a few questions:

What occupies your time?

Is it worrying about your physical wellbeing, how you look and how you feel?

Is it worrying about your social wellbeing, what people think about you, or your family or your friends or your business associates.

Or is finding ways of how you can give praise and thanks to God for all he has blessed you with occupy much of your time. Really does it?

I ask you, What takes most of your day? Do you return to the Lord who has:

- **cured you from the leprosy of sin,**
- **gives you the air you breathe,**
- **blesses you with the body your spirit dwells in,**
- **bequeathes on you the friends and family and relationships which surround you?**

I ask you: Do return and give thanks to the Lord for all he has done for you or are you like the nine lepers whose every hour of the day is consumed with your physical well being and social status?

Sheets to fill out to deepen our relationship with the Lord in prayer and lifestyle.

One out of ten

19 people out of 500 households

Baptisms this week. What kind of lifestyle will we witness for our children?

How can I be so ungrateful?