

Sixth Sunday of Ordinary Time: Unclean No More

- When I visit a hospital I often will come upon a room that with a warning on the door. It will say, “Infection. All visitors must check with nurses station and then use mask, gloves and gown.”
 - I felt bad for the poor patient - it made them seem like an outcast
 - BUT we at least taking care of them
 - That was not the case back in the days of our Jesus
 - When people were seen as infected, they were isolated from the community.
 - No one would care for them, no matter how sick they were. They were unclean.
 - In fact, that had to walk around with a bell and continually shout, “Unclean, Unclean.” By *unclean* they meant more than dirty. *Unclean* meant “possessed by evil.”
 - So these poor people were forced to live completely isolated from society, with no one to care for them, hoping that some kind people would leave them food or scraps
 - If they walked from one place to another, they had to call out “Unclean,” not just so people could avoid them, but so the people could be protected from the evil that must have done this to them.
- And then Jesus came.
 - He cured lepers - He did not see people who were unclean - He did not fear evil.
 - He saw people who were suffering.
 - He saw them, cared for them, and healed them.
 - They wouldn’t have to go around calling out, “Unclean” anymore.
- There are times that we also feel unclean.
 - We know when we have fallen for the attack of evil.
 - When we see our parents, friends, or other people we love, we feel guilty
 - “They are good,” we realize, and we ask, “What if they were to know what I’ve done?”
 - Or we come to Church & see so many people trying to be good, & feel we don’t belong.
 - We want to call out to others, “Unclean, Unclean, stay away from me.”
 - BUT like the leper in the Gospel, we don’t have to remain unclean.
 - Jesus healed the leper. He saved him from the grips of evil.
 - We come before the Lord, and he doesn’t see our sin.
 - He sees someone He loves who is hurting – and He heals us.
 - He saves us from the grips of evil.
 - We talk a lot about salvation in the Church.
 - It might seem to be a theological term, that doesn’t relate to us.
 - But then we fall, and we are caught by the Lord. He heals us - Salvation.
- We might know people who are convinced that they are unclean.
 - They may be involved in drugs, alcohol, sex or have a pretty bad reputation.
 - I am going to challenge you - Be nice to them. Be kind to them. *Don’t join them in evil*,
 - But don’t think of them as despicable. Jesus never treated people that way.
 - Pray for them. And, perhaps, by the grace of God, they also will come before Jesus and seek to be made clean.
- What a horrible thing it is to go through life feeling unclean.
 - What a wonderful thing it is to know that with Jesus Christ, none of us are unclean.
 - In fact, we are more than not unclean.
 - With Jesus Christ we are all beautiful – His beloved
 - And if Jesus loves them, who are we to condemn