

# **LOOKING TO SUNDAY®**

**Sunday, October 12, 2025**

## ***The Twenty-Eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time***

This email, entitled Looking to Sunday®, focuses on one or more of the scripture readings for the coming Sunday. It prepares readers to hear God's Word at Mass and it offers a point of reflection to consider in the days leading to Sunday. Looking to Sunday is written by Father Tom Iwanowski.

Looking to Sunday has been published for more than sixteen years.

### **"LEPROSY" IN OUR LIVES**

Television programs are saturated with advertisements for prescription drugs designed to treat diabetes, arthritis, depression, cancer, obesity, high cholesterol, sexual dysfunction, skin disorders, and other medical conditions. Interestingly, the people appearing in these commercials seem perfectly healthy as they enthusiastically promote the benefits of a particular drug.

We probably pay little attention to such commercials unless we are dealing with an illness that an advertised medication is designed to treat.

This Sunday, our readings are about people with leprosy. The disease was considered so dangerous and contagious that those with leprosy were isolated, shunned, and considered "the living dead."

In our First Reading (2 Kings 5:14-17), we hear about Namaan, a pagan army commander, suffering with leprosy. The Prophet Elisha directs Namaan to plunge seven times into the Jordan River. Namaan does as directed, and he is cured of his leprosy by the power of God.

In our Gospel Reading (Luke 17:11-19), Luke tells us about a group of ten men bound together by their leprosy. Nine were Jews, and the tenth was a despised Samaritan. When they catch sight of Jesus, they cry out, "Jesus, Master! Have pity on us!"

Jesus instructs them to go and show themselves to the priests who could certify a person was healed of leprosy. As they go, the ten are cured. At once, the Samaritan retraces his steps and returns to give thanks to Jesus, just as Namaan returned to give thanks to the Prophet Elisha.

Both readings are vivid reminders of the importance of thanking God for our blessings. In fact, Sunday's Gospel reading is often proclaimed on Thanksgiving Day.

However, the readings can take on a further meaning when we realize that at the time of Jesus, leprosy and other physical infirmities were considered an outward manifestation of personal sin, a sign of spiritual illness, and even divine punishment.

For example, we are told that when Jesus and his disciples met a man blind from birth, the disciples asked, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" (John 9:2). And when Jesus cured a man who had been sick for 38 years, he warned him, "Look, you are well; do not sin any more, so that nothing worse may happen to you" (John 5:14).

Although we are not suffering from leprosy, we are not free of the sin and evil, which were often represented by that disease in the scriptures. Like Namaan and the ten men, we need to call upon the Lord.

As he did for Namaan, God responds to our need for healing. Like him, we are told to wash in the Jordan, not the actual river but the waters of baptism represented by that river in which Jesus himself was baptized. In that baptismal water, we are washed clean of the “leprosy” of Original Sin.

Later in life, when we recognize the “leprosy” of personal sin that infects our lives, the Lord Jesus directs us to do what he told the ten men in the Gospel. He tells us to “Go show yourselves to the priests.” The Lord sends us to his priests where we can experience his healing and forgiveness in the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

This Sunday’s readings can seem as unrelated to our lives as those endless commercials touting drugs for illnesses we do not have. However, once we appreciate the symbolism of leprosy found in the scriptures, we realize we certainly need the cure offered by Jesus our Savior and Lord.

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