

Alleluia, alleluia!

For all things give thanks to God,
because this is what he expects of you in
Christ Jesus.

Alleluia!

GOSPEL

Lk 17:11-19

A reading from the holy Gospel according
to Luke.

*It seems that no one has returned to give thanks to
God except this foreigner.*

On the way to Jerusalem Jesus travelled along the border between Samaria and Galilee. As he entered one of the villages, ten lepers came to meet him. They stood some way off and called to him, 'Jesus! Master! Take pity on us.' When he saw them he said, 'Go and show yourselves to the priests.' Now as they were going away they were cleansed. Finding himself cured, one of them turned back praising God at the top of his voice and threw himself at the feet of Jesus and thanked him. The man was a Samaritan. This made Jesus say, 'Were not all ten made clean? The other nine, where are they? It seems that no one has come back to give praise to God, except this foreigner.' And he said to the man, 'Stand up and go on your way. Your faith has saved you.'

■ The Gospel of the Lord.

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Reflections on the Gospel

WHAT SALVATION REALLY MEANS

Jesus is on his long journey to Jerusalem. At the border between Samaria and Galilee, ten people afflicted with skin diseases cry out to him for help, keeping their distance as the Law of Moses required.

All ten are made clean when they follow his instructions to go and show themselves to the priest.

For nine of them, that is where the matter ends. But the tenth, who also happens to be a Samaritan, returns to Jesus, loudly praising God. When he prostrates himself in gratitude, Jesus remarks on the absence of the other nine.

Here we have one of several instances in Luke's Gospel where Jesus confronts his audience with a 'good Samaritan'. The appropriate behaviour of a 'foreigner', one on the margins of Jewish society, has shown up the shortcomings of those in the mainstream.

The Samaritan is the only one of the ten who receives from Jesus the assurance: 'Stand up and go on your way: your faith has brought you salvation.' The other nine may have received physical healing. They did not really experience 'salvation'. Beyond physical healing, the 'salvation' brought by Jesus means coming to know God in a new way: knowing God as Saviour, and allowing that knowledge to overflow in gratitude, love, and joy. This is the 'knowledge of salvation' of which Zechariah spoke in his canticle (the *Benedictus*) at the naming of John (1:77).

So today's Gospel is not just about the healing of an afflicted person. Another 'good Samaritan' has shown what salvation really means for all.

Brendan Byrne, SJ

THE SAVING WORD

TWENTY-EIGHTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME / C

13 OCTOBER 2019

FIRST READING

2 Kings 5:14-17

A reading from the second book of the Kings
*Naaman returned to Elisha, the prophet, and
acknowledged the Lord.*

Naaman the leper went down and immersed himself seven times in the Jordan, as Elisha had told him to do. And his flesh became clean once more like the flesh of a little child.

Returning to Elisha with his whole escort, he went in and stood before him. 'Now I know' he said 'that there is no God in all the earth except in Israel. Now, please, accept a present from your servant.' But Elisha replied, 'As the Lord lives, whom I serve, I will accept nothing.' Naaman pressed him to accept, but he refused. Then Naaman said, 'Since your answer is "No," allow your servant to be given as much earth as two mules may carry, because your servant will no longer offer holocaust or sacrifice to any god except the Lord.'

■ The word of the Lord.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

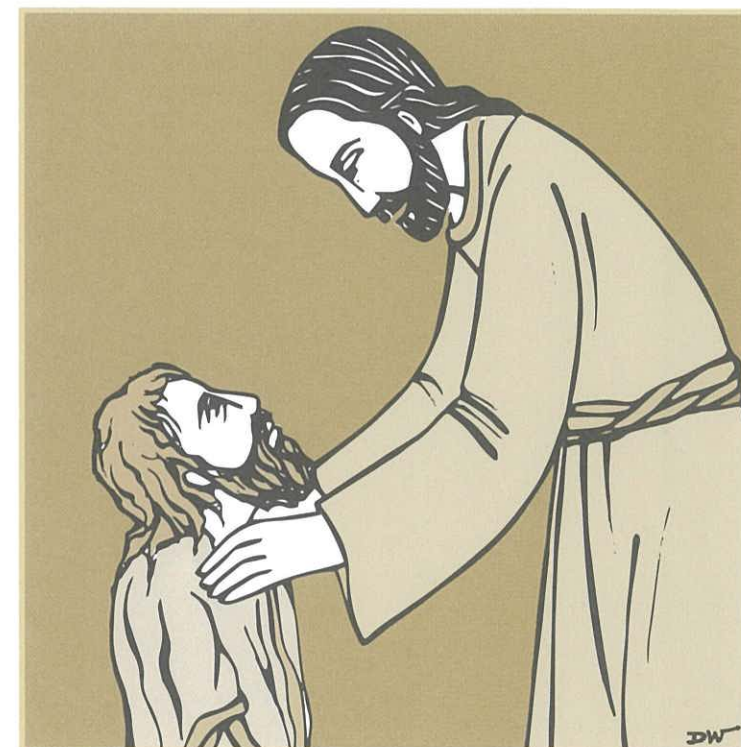
Ps 97:1-4. R. cf. v. 2

R. The Lord has revealed to the nations
his saving power.

1. Sing a new song to the Lord / for he has
worked wonders. / His right hand and his holy
arm / have brought salvation. **R.**

2. The Lord has made known his salvation; /
has shown his justice to the nations. / He has
remembered his truth and love / for the house
of Israel. **R.**

3. All the ends of the earth have seen / the
salvation of our God. / Shout to the Lord all
the earth, / ring out your joy. **R.**



SECOND READING

2 Tim 2:8-13

A reading from the second letter of St Paul
to Timothy

If we hold firm, we shall reign with Christ.

Remember the Good News that I carry, 'Jesus Christ risen from the dead, sprung from the race of David'; it is on account of this that I have my own hardships to bear, even to being chained like a criminal – but they cannot chain up God's news. So I bear it all for the sake of those who are chosen, so that in the end they may have the salvation that is in Christ Jesus and the eternal glory that comes with it.

Here is a saying that you can rely on:

If we have died with him, then we shall live
with him.

If we hold firm, then we shall reign with him.

If we disown him, then he will disown us.

We may be unfaithful, but he is always
faithful,
for he cannot disown his own self.

■ The word of the Lord.