

Commentary to the 6th Sunday in Ordinary Time – Year B –

Evil exists but is not invincible



During the crossing of the desert, Moses had given to the people this provision: “The Lord your God walks in the midst of the camp to protect you and give your enemy into your hands; your camp must be sacred that the Lord may not see anything indecent in it; otherwise, he will turn away from you” (Deut 23:15). He put this order in the Lord’s mouth: “Put out of the camp all lepers, and all who suffer from a contagious infection or who have become unclean by touching a corpse... . You must not allow the camp where I dwell among them to become unclean in this way” (Num 5:1-3).

To the ancient, the world seemed to be divided into two opposing spheres: one occupied by the forces of life, the other in the hands of the powers of death. To the first, God and the pure people belonged, to the second all pagan gods and all that recalled sin. The lepers, who carried in their bodies the hideous marks of death, were the symbol of impurity and rejection by the Lord.

The Israelites thought so; their spiritual leaders have categorized people into clean and unclean, just and sinners. But does God accept this discrimination? And when it is done, on which side is God?

The Gospel accounts of Jesus' encounters with the lepers go far beyond the biographical chronicle. They are a message in place of God's choices: he approaches the impure and caresses them, because none of his creatures is impure, much less his children. Jesus chose the marginalized, those who were rejected by all; for this reason, he became impure himself, was expelled from the camp and put to death out of the holy city, in an unclean place.

Now we know on which side God is. To internalize the message, we repeat:

“I disgust sin, but if I refuse the sinner, I walk away from God.”

-----[First Reading](#) | [Second Reading](#) | [Gospel](#)-----

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 10:31–11:1

Gospel: Mark 1:40-45

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