

**FATHER MARK SCHULTE HOMILY**  
**Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time (B)**  
**February 14, 2021**  
**“Sin As Disease”**

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In today’s Gospel, we see how Jesus shows compassion of the man who had the terrible disease of Leprosy.

From the very beginning, the condition of man has been plagued with various kinds of diseases. The presence of disease is the physical sign that the body is always in various stages of dying.

We know as the Apostle Paul tell us that death entered into the world by sin, and that ultimately each person will die in his body and leave this world. Some people will die peacefully in their sleep. But many die due to the ravages of diseases of one kind or another.

And, so for the people of the Old Testament, sin and disease are somehow connected, and the person suffering from a disease is doing so because he has sinned against God in some way. The Apostles even questioned Jesus about this regarding the man born blind. John 9:2, “Who sinned, He or his Parents”?

Leprosy was a particularly terrible disease and was thought to be contagious and so the Lepper was required to live outside the community in isolation (First Reading).

Realities in the physical world often point to a reality in the spiritual world.

- A disease such as Leprosy is part of the physical world, the world of material things.
- Sin is part of the spiritual world – because sin is an offense against God – who is spirit.
- Man – because he is made in the image and likeness of God and has a soul lives in both the physical and spiritual world.

When Jesus heals the Lepper, it points to how he will eventually heal us from the effects of sin – which is death.

The person who is healed from his sins will eventually live in the eternal life of heaven where there is no sin and, therefore, no diseases. This is the destiny that the believer in Jesus Christ hopes for.

We saw how the person with the terrible disease of Leprosy was required to separate himself from the community. If he was determined by the high

priest to have been cured of his disease, he was then restored back to the community.

The person who sins seriously, mortally, separates “himself” not only from the community, which is the Church, God’s people, but he separates himself from God also; and if he remains separated from God and his body the Church, he will eventually die in his sins and be condemned.

When Jesus had pity on the man with Leprosy and cured him and then restored him back to his community, He was showing us how when we are forgiven of our sins we too can be restored back to God and His community, His Body the Church.

It is easy for us to see how terrible a disease can be and how important it is to be cured of it if we wish to go on living.

The effect of sin in our soul is infinitely worse than any physical disease.

Unfortunately, unlike the disease which we can see, we cannot see how ugly sin is and how it destroys the soul, and because we cannot see it, we do not seek to be healed from it by asking God for forgiveness.

Some people are walking around with their souls completely dead because of the disease of sin.

If a person is lucky enough their sins will manifest themselves in their bodies in the form of illnesses. I say that this person is lucky because he can know for sure that he needs to seek God’s forgiveness.

God does not want us to wait until our sins make themselves known in our body – but instead to seek God’s loving forgiveness each day.

Don’t make the mistake of thinking that your soul is free from the effects of sin. Let God determine that, He is the Divine Physician. Only God can make you clean. We heard this from the Leper who said to Jesus: “If you will, you can make me clean.”.

- Jesus said: “I do will it.”
- Choose to go to confession today and be made clean.