

## 28<sup>th</sup> Sunday of the Year C

*If we have died with him, then we shall live with him.  
We may be unfaithful, but he is always faithful,  
for he cannot disown his own self. (2 Tm 2:11.13)*



### First Reading

*2 Kings 5:14-17*

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."

### Second Reading

*2 Timothy 2:8-13*

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.

On the way to Jerusalem Jesus travelled along the border between Samaria and Galilee. As he entered one of the villages, ten lepers came out 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."

## Meditation

*The episode of the ten lepers follows from the parable of humble service read last Sunday. It again invites us to wonder at the gracious gifts of God. On his journey to Jerusalem, Jesus meets leprosy, an illness which cuts the sufferer off from worship and the presence of others. Like those poor in the psalms who call on the loving tenderness of the God of the covenant, the lepers cry out to the one in whom they discern a saviour. In sending them first to those who are qualified to verify a cure, Jesus not only makes them a promise, he also puts their faith to the test. For, at that moment, they are not yet cured. They are healed "on the way", by obeying Jesus' word. Then, filled with joy, but forgetful of the giver, they scatter.*

*There is one exception, a Samaritan, a foreigner! For him alone the journey of faith is not complete until he returns to the giver of the gift. Jesus continues the dialogue by sending him forth once more, this time as a disciple.*