



# The Mar Thoma Church Diocese of North America & Europe Christian Education Forum

## Lenten Meditations

### CLEANSING

#### Luke 5:12-16

Mother Teresa says, "I have come more and more to realize that it is being Unwanted that is the worst disease that any human being can experience. Nowadays we have found medicine for leprosy and lepers can be cured. But for being unwanted, I don't think this terrible sickness can ever be cured except by the willing hands to serve and loving hearts to love and care".

#### **Sin, the leprosy makes one unclean.**

Leprosy, in Jesus' days was considered a wretched disease. The most terrible thing about it was the isolation it brought to the patient. Lepers were to cry 'unclean ! unclean !' wherever they went and were condemned to live alone in a dwelling 'outside the camp', banished from society and exiled from home. Hence the psychological consequences of leprosy were as serious as the physical. Such a poor man approaches Jesus and prays for cleansing him. Jesus heals him with a touching touch. In the Bible sin is portrayed as leprosy. David the psalmist prays, "cleanse me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow." Hyssop was used to sprinkle the blood of the sacrificial animal on lepers for cleansing them.

#### **Sin, the leprosy damages the power of sensitivity.**

Fr. Joseph Damien ministered to people with leprosy on the island of Molokai, Hawaii, in the 19th century. Those suffering grew to love him and revere this missionary's sacrificial life. But even he didn't know the price he'd pay. One morning before leading them in their daily worship, he was pouring boiling water into a cup when it swirled out onto his bare foot. It took him a moment to realize that he'd felt nothing. Gripped by the sudden fear of what this could mean, he poured more hot water on the same spot. No sensation! Damien immediately knew what had happened. As he walked tearfully to deliver his sermon, no one at first noticed the difference in his opening line. He normally began every sermon with "My fellow believers." But this morning he began with, "My fellow lepers."

#### **The cleansing touch of Jesus.**

By touching the untouchable Jesus was revealing the heart of God. In a greater measure Jesus came into this world knowing what it would cost him. He bore in his pure being the marks of evil that we might be made pure. Therefore, we should be able to stretch forth our hands towards those who thirst for love and care. Loving hands have got cleansing power.

**Prayer:** "O lord, purify my heart, cleanse me from my sin and make me holy. Purify my heart cleanse me from my sin, deep within I choose to be holy, set apart for You my master. Ready to do your will. Amen".

**Rev. Zachariah John, Houston**

*"I am willing, be clean"*  
*Luke 5:13*