

PRAY: 28th Sunday of Ordinary Time

Week #2 Sunday Homily Helps

28th Sunday in Ordinary Time (Luke 17:11–19)—October 11th and 12th

- **Jesus sees the outcast:** The ten lepers cry out from a distance, excluded by law and stigma. Likewise, people on death row are often cast aside as “untouchable” or “unredeemable.” Yet Jesus acknowledges their dignity and responds with healing mercy.
→ Connect: Catholic teaching affirms that “the dignity of the person is not lost even after the commission of very serious crimes” (CCC 2267).
- **Healing leads to gratitude:** Only the Samaritan—considered a “foreigner”—returns to give thanks. He embodies the response of faith. We are called not just to receive mercy, but to give thanks by becoming agents of mercy ourselves.
→ Connect: Ending the death penalty is an act of gratitude for God’s mercy toward us; it extends that mercy to others.
- **Faith and salvation, not punishment, transform:** Jesus tells the Samaritan, “Your faith has saved you.” Healing and salvation come not through retribution, but through faith that leads to restored relationship.
→ Connect: Restorative justice asks not “How should they be punished?” but “What was the harm, and how can relationships be healed?”
- **Jesus rejects a culture of vengeance:** The other nine may have been satisfied with ritual purity, but the Samaritan recognizes something deeper: salvation. Similarly, our culture often seeks retribution (death penalty) rather than redemption.
→ Connect: Pope Francis insists: “Not even a murderer loses his personal dignity, and God himself pledges to guarantee this” (*Fratelli Tutti*, 269).
- **The Church’s call to consistent life ethic:** Just as Jesus did not exclude the Samaritan or the leper, we cannot exclude those guilty of grave crimes from the community of life. The death penalty denies the possibility of conversion and redemption.
→ Connect: “The death penalty is inadmissible because it is an attack on the inviolability and dignity of the person” (CCC 2267)

Possible Preaching Hooks

- **“Who do we treat like lepers today?”** Just as the lepers were cast out of the community, many in our society are deemed “untouchable” — including those on death row. Jesus shows us that no one is beyond the reach of mercy.
- **“Only one came back.”** The Samaritan’s gratitude reminds us that faith isn’t just about receiving blessings — it’s about responding. How do we respond to God’s mercy? One way is by extending mercy to others, even those society considers beyond saving.

PRAY: Week #2

Sample Petitions for Prayers of the Faithful

28th Sunday in Ordinary Time (Luke 17:5–10)—October 4th and 5th

For lawmakers and elected officials. May your spirit of love and compassion transform their hearts and inspire them to place the needs of human life above all. *We pray to the Lord...*

For all those impacted by crime and acts of harm. May the victims of crime and their families know your healing power and be transformed by your mercy. *We pray to the Lord...*

For all those on death row awaiting execution, and those lives we have lost to the death penalty. May they know your unending love and forgiveness as children of God. *We pray to the Lord...*

For each of us who works to end the death penalty, advance justice, and promote healing in our hurting world, and for all the prayers we hold in the silence of our hearts
May we know the comfort of God's love and remain steadfast in our pursuit of Jesus' reconciling way. *We pray to the Lord...*