

GOSPEL PEARLS

The true ecumenism

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A leper came to him (and kneeling down) begged him and said, "If you wish, you can make me clean." Moved with pity, he stretched out his hand, touched him, and said to him, "I do will it. Be made clean." The leprosy left him immediately, and he was made clean. Then, warning him sternly, he dismissed him at once. Then he said to him, "See that you tell no one anything, but go, show yourself to the priest and offer for your cleansing what Moses prescribed; that will be proof for them." The man went away and began to publicize the whole matter. He spread the report abroad so that it was impossible for Jesus to enter a town openly. He remained outside in deserted places, and people kept coming to him from everywhere. (Mk 1, 40-45)

The man with leprosy hands over his destiny into the hands of Jesus, submitting himself to his will. Even the posture of his body, kneeling, expresses his submission and implicit recognition of the divinity of Jesus. Leprosy was, by its nature, a disease that marginalized, as those who were afflicted were isolated from the community. Isolation is thus, in this case, a sign of separation that only God can heal. Today authentic ecumenism between Christians separated from the Church can take place by rediscovering the true Jesus and placing him at the center, not a projection of him that simply makes everyone happy. In short, more than we need the ecumenism of dialogue we need the ecumenism of return (to the Catholic Church).