

Dear Padre,

How long is Mass supposed to last? My sister leaves after an hour even if the priest is still talking. Shouldn't she wait until it's over?

There's no rule about how long Mass should last, but it's inappropriate to arrive late or leave before the final blessing or the end of the recessional song. People should leave early only if they get sick or if they're doctors, police officers, or firefighters called away for an emergency.

Weekend activities should be scheduled around Mass. Saturday night Masses were designed for people who work Sundays and for parishes with too few priests to accommodate everyone on Sunday. They weren't designed to make it easier to get a good tee time on Sunday morning.

It's also important to remember that local customs and traditions affect the length of Mass. When I worked as a missionary in Brazil, Sunday Mass could go on for nearly three hours. When I celebrated Mass in Scotland, the pastor said I had to be done in a half-hour.

Most areas have more than one church. Encourage your sister to either grow accustomed to the tradition of the parish she attends or look for another church. As a rule, I don't think it's good to "shop around" for Mass, but if your sister is that bothered by the length of the Mass at her current church, it might be better for her to go elsewhere.

Fr. Patrick Keyes, CSsR / Sundaybulletin@Liguori.org



A WORD FROM Pope Francis

Mass begins with the Sign of the Cross, with these introductory rites, because there we begin to adore God as a community. And for this reason, it is important to make sure you do not arrive late, but rather early, in order to prepare the heart for this rite, for this community celebration.

GENERAL AUDIENCE, DECEMBER 20, 2017



Our Parish Community

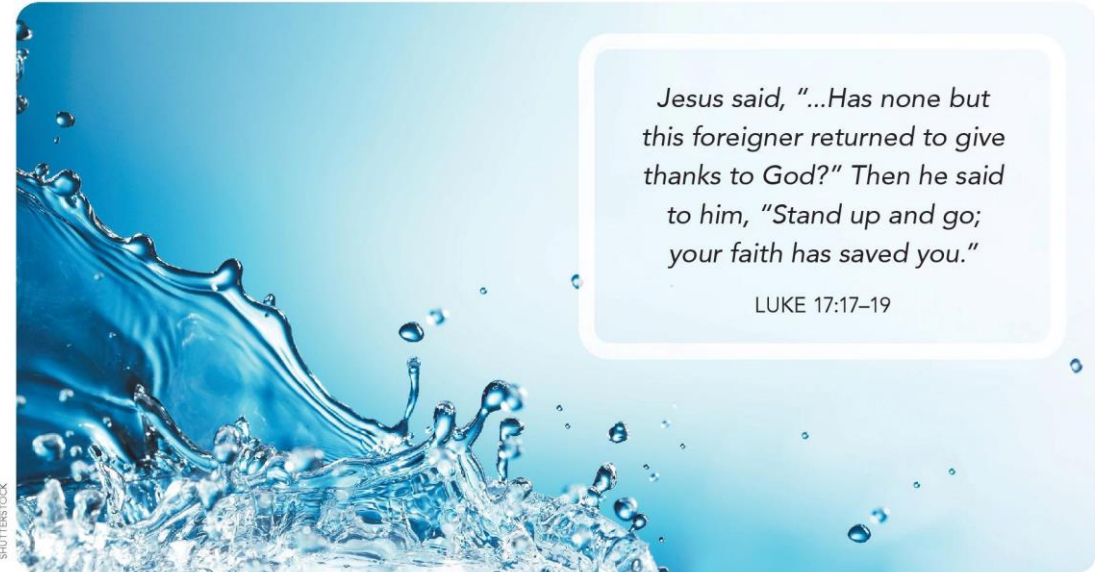
October 9, 2022

Twenty-eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time (C)

2 Kgs 5:14-17

2 Tm 2:8-13

Lk 17:11-19



Jesus said, "...Has none but this foreigner returned to give thanks to God?" Then he said to him, "Stand up and go; your faith has saved you."

LUKE 17:17-19

They Were Cleansed

The men in today's passages were considered outside the realm of God's concern. First, they were foreigners. Naaman was from Syria, a frequent enemy of ancient Israel. The man in the Gospel passage was a Samaritan, a descendant of marriage between Israelites and foreign people who were exiled to northern Israel around 722 BC. These men were outsiders, distrusted, even despised because they were not Israelites who believed that only they were "a kingdom of priests, a holy nation" (Exodus 19:6).

Besides their foreign affiliation, these men suffered from the dreaded disease of leprosy. Their affliction might not have been the disease we know by that name today, but perhaps a skin condition such as psoriasis or eczema. Whatever the case, Israel held that any form of skin flare-up rendered the sufferer unclean or unfit to participate in public ritual. Furthermore, contact with lepers threatened the religious status of others.

It was for religious, more than hygienic reasons that lepers were shunned.

It appears that God is not inhibited by human customs, even religious customs. Both men are healed of their ailment, one by the prophet Elisha the other by Jesus. This itself would make both stories remarkable. But there is more: Both returned to express their profound gratitude to the agent of God through whom they had been healed. Naaman was willing to transfer his religious allegiance to the God of Israel; the Samaritan fell at the knees of Jesus, a hated Jew. Surely, God works in mysterious ways.

Sr. Dianne Bergant, CSA

FOR Reflection

- ★ Think of someone who belongs to a different religious tradition. Reflect on how God appears to have blessed them.
- ★ Pray for all countries that today are suffering from poverty or war.