



### ENTERING THE SCENE:

Fr. Beck says: "Jesus takes the risk of accepting the invitation to a relationship that the leper begs for: *If you wish, you can make me clean. If you wish, in other words. You can meet me as a person, meet me face to face, look into my eyes to see a human spirit dwelling there. You can count yourself as an exception to those who discount me, who look right through me, who avert their eyes when I am around, who quickly move off in the other directions. If you wish, you can count me as a fellow human being, and not as a specimen of danger, a case of pollution. Jesus said, I do will it. Be made clean. And*

he reached out and touched him." The man in the drawing who is outside the box can come in. Now the question is, can we move beyond our safe circle of prayer to reach out and touch? Are we the one in the circle looking out not in?

### Mark 1: 40-45 (Mt. 8: 1-4) (Lk. 5: 12-16)

40 A man with **leprosy** came to him and **begged** him on his **knees**, "**If you are willing**, you can **make me clean**." 41 **Filled with compassion**, Jesus **reached out** his hand and **touched** the man. "**I am willing**," he said. "**Be clean!**" 42 **Immediately** the **leprosy** left him and he was **cured**. 43 Jesus **sent him away** at once with a **strong warning**: 44 See that you **don't tell** this to anyone. But go, **show yourself to the priest** and **offer the sacrifices** that **Moses** commanded for your **cleansing**, as a **testimony** to them." 45 Instead he **went out** and began to **talk freely**, **spreading the news**. As a result, Jesus **could no longer enter a town openly** but **stayed outside in lonely places**. Yet the people **still came to him from everywhere**.

**DISCUSSION QUESTION:** The leper didn't doubt that Jesus could help him if he asked. Am I equally confident that God is not only able but eager to help when I ask?

**PRAYER:** Lord, Mark tells me that you were filled with compassion when you reached out and touched the untouchable leper. So often when I fail, I find it most difficult to forgive myself and therefore think you also have this same limitation. Help me to have the confidence of the leper to reach out to you when I am deathly sick in my failures to love, trusting all the while in your unconditional love. Amen.