

Thursday 1st week

Gospel text (Mk 1,40-45): A leper came to Jesus and begged Him, «If you so will, you can make me clean». Moved with pity, Jesus stretched out his hand and touched him, saying, «I will; be clean». The leprosy left the man at once and he was made clean. As Jesus sent the man away, he sternly warned him, «Don't tell anyone about this, but go and show yourself to the priest and for the cleansing bring the offering ordered by Moses; in this way you will make your declaration».

However, as soon as the man went out, he began spreading the news everywhere, so that Jesus could no longer openly enter any town. But even though he stayed in the rural areas, people came to him from everywhere.

«'If you so will, you can make me clean' (...). 'I will; be clean'»

Fr. Xavier PAGÉS i Castañer
(Barcelona, Spain)

Today, in the first reading we read: «As the Holy Spirit says: Today, if you hear his voice 'do not harden your hearts'» (Heb 3:7-8). And we constantly repeat it in the response to Psalm 94. In this brief quote, two points are raised: a longing and a warning. Both should never be forgotten.

During our daily prayer we long for and hope to hear our Lord's voice. But, perhaps more often than not, we fill it with our own words without allowing us time to listen to what the Good God may wish to tell us. Let us, therefore, take care of our inner silence which —by avoiding distractions and centering our attention— opens up a space to receive the affections and inspirations Our Lord, most certainly, wants to impregnate our hearts with.

A risk we must never forget is the risk that dwelling on the old sin may harden our

spiritual heart. Life's hazards, at times, may make us—even without our realizing it— more leery, insensible, disheartened, forlorn...! We must beg our Lord to make us more conscientious of this inner downgrading. Our prayer offers us the opportunity to look serenely at our own life and to all circumstances surrounding it. We must meditate over the different events in the Light of the Gospel, to discover where we are in need of an authentic change.

If only we could hope for our change with the same degree of faith and confidence as the leper showed when he asked Jesus!: «He came to Jesus and begged Him, 'If you so will, you can make me clean'» (Mk 1:40). He is the only one to make possible what for us is simply impossible. Let God act through His Grace upon us so our hearts can be purified and, meek to His influence, may every day become more in the image and semblance of Jesus' heart. He is telling us, in confidence: «I will; be clean» (Mk 1:41).