



**Be strong ...
I am willing**

Second week of the Lent

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Lent 2019



Marc 1:35 - 45

Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed. 36 Simon and his companions went to look for him, and when they found him, they exclaimed:

“Everyone is looking for you!” Jesus replied, “Let us go somewhere else—to the nearby villages—so I can preach there also. That is why I have come.” So he traveled throughout Galilee, preaching in their synagogues and driving out demons. A man with leprosy came to him and begged him on his knees, “If you are willing, you can make me clean.” Jesus was indignant. He reached out his hand and touched the man. “I am willing,” he said. “Be clean!” Immediately the leprosy left him and he was cleansed. Jesus sent him away at once with a strong warning: “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.” 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.

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Meditation

“If you are willing, you can...”

Despite all the obstacles that the Law of Moses imposed on us, You willed God to hear our crying, to feel our weakness, and to bring us back to your lap.

Because of your unlimited love to our humanity, You willed God, not to judge our leprosy nor our feebleness, but to offer us the spiritual and physical healing, and to give us back our dignity as Your children.

Because You wore our humanity, You walked this earth, and touched our disabilities, You willed God to teach us how to come to You as children crying to you with the leper: “If you are willing, you can make me clean”.

Because You want to raise us and to renew our life, so that we taste and see how much You are good, and thus preach what You did for us. You willed God to stretch out your saint hand to give us strength and hope, therefore You willed to touch our entity, allowing us to offer You our leprosy like a sacrifice of love and thanksgiving.

“I am willing, be clean!” with His hand’s touch, and His word the leper became clean, let us trust His love, hear His word, grab His hand, and break free with the grace of the childhood from all what separate us from Him, for he is the source of eternal life.

Sister Nahida Awad

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Texts for meditation

- 2 Corinthians 4: 7 – 18 “It is written: “I believed; therefore, I have spoken.” Since we have that same spirit of faith, we also believe and therefore speak”
- Psalm 116: 1 - 19 “I love the Lord, for he heard my voice; he heard my cry for mercy. Because he turned his ear to me, I will call on him as long as I live”
- Ephesian 6: 14 - 20 “Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace”
- Sirach 2: 1 – 11 “Set your heart right and be steadfast, and do not be impetuous in time of calamity. Cling to him and do not depart”
- John 12: 37 – 50 “Then Jesus cried aloud: “Whoever believes in me believes not in me but in him who sent me. And whoever sees me sees him who sent me. I have come as light into the world, so that everyone who believes in me should not remain in the darkness.”

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Reading from the fathers of the Church

Be aware my friend that faith is like a structure based on stone, and this is how a human being advances when his faith awakens: Primarily he believes, therefore he loves, then, he who loves hopes, then again by his hope he is justified, and finally, by his justification the structure of faith is complete, becoming a Temple and a dwelling place for Christ.

Henceforth, he who became by faith such a dwelling place for the Lord, must consider what actions are worthy for the service of such an important Inhabitant, what ornaments are appropriate to his highness, for he fixed his structure of faith on stone, on Jesus Christ, thus it rose and towered to the skies. The habitation of that structure requires true fasting stemming from faith, pure prayers with inherent love, and alms that heartens the Lord with humility that follows.

These are some of the adornments required by the faith based on rock, on Jesus Christ, these are what fit for such a king, a king dwelling in those who are embellished by such virtues.

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Psalm 108

My heart is steadfast, O God, my heart is steadfast;

I will sing and make melody. Awake, my soul!

Awake, O harp and lyre! I will awake the dawn.

I will give thanks to you, O Lord, among the peoples,

and I will sing praises to you among the nations.

For your steadfast love is higher than the heavens,

and your faithfulness reaches to the clouds.

Be exalted, O God, above the heavens, and let your glory

be over all the earth.

Give victory with your right hand, and answer me, so that

those whom you love may be rescued.