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RELIGIOUS



BULLETIN

Dolores W. Tanen

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Office of University Ministry

University of Notre Dame

Outsiders Insiders

Mary Romer Cline

Fear, loathing, nausea, dread! The sight of a leper could engender these responses in New Testament times. For their own safety, the people had to protect themselves from contamination by this disfiguring, odious ailment. Perhaps it is not too surprising that lepers were required to wear bells, or shout "Unclean, unclean" guaranteeing that others would keep their distance. It is interesting, too, that it was the religious authorities who were required to regulate such illness and enforce the consequent ostracism from the life of the community.

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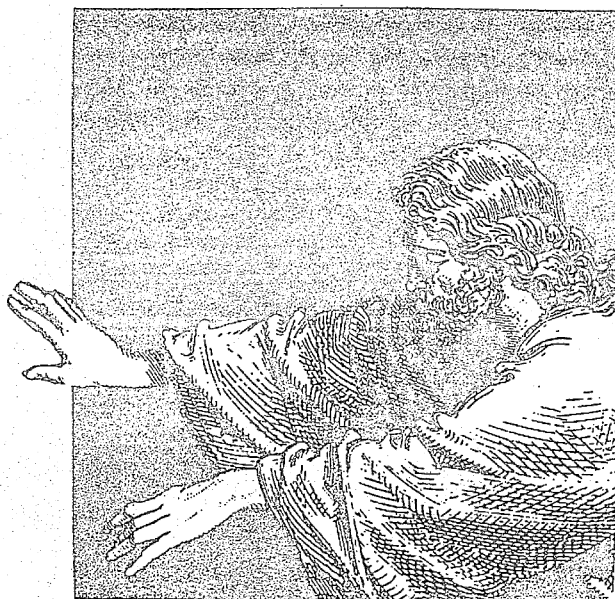


This is natural, isn't it? It is important to maintain boundaries between the law-abiding and the criminal, between the self-sufficient and the dependent, between the initiated and the uninitiated. For our own integrity, must we not draw the line somewhere? "Of course!" we conclude.

Yet, Jesus frequently went beyond the social boundaries of his society. He transgressed social customs through such actions as associating with public sinners, speaking with a Samaritan woman, healing the hemorrhaging woman, and touching the leper of today's Gospel reading. This touch of Jesus was so powerful that for this leper it brought about healing - and INCLUSION. The boundary that separated him from others was permanently destroyed. What power Jesus had!

But we, too, have that power - power to condemn, power to forgive, power to ostracize, power to include, power to reject, power to befriend, power to erect a boundary, power to tear it down. We may either bring into the circle those naturally excluded, or we may choose to stand outside the boundary with them. Even in little ways our actions can have an effect on those around us. We cannot underestimate the power of the single touch!

Jesus proclaims and inaugurates the Kingdom of God where there are no social classes, ranks, or boundaries of any kind. And he chooses to align himself with those outside of society's boundaries. Some of his parables include paradoxes and reversals - where the "outsiders" become the "insiders" in the Kingdom of God (Good Samaritan and the other passersby, Rich Man and Lazarus, Pharisee and Publican).



In these times when there is so much hardship and pain, so many hungry, unemployed and homeless people, we often hear of the need to offer hospitality to the "stranger," to that person in need. There is so much to be done - so many needs to be met, so many people, even here at Notre Dame, who need our healing touch!

Yet, the need may be ours, to learn from the "outsiders," to be apprised of the conventions which bind us as "insiders," and to see the world from their perspective. Certain crucial truths may be more easily seen when we take the view of those who live on the margin, truths that can break our hearts open to see what the Lord requires, truths that empowered this leper to take a risk for an encounter with Jesus. Even though we might be repulsed by the "lepers," they might hold the keys to the Kingdom.

Mary Romer Cline is a member of the Staff at University Ministry

As God's ministers
we must be patient
in times of affliction,
be pure minded, forgiving,
relying on the Holy Spirit
and sincere love.
They call us
deceivers,
and we tell the truth;
Sad men,
and we rejoice continually;
beggars,
and we bring riches to many;
disinherited,
and the world is ours!

SAINT PAUL

Wednesday Lenten Reflections - 11pm
"What Has Lent Meant To You?"

Reflections by:

Fr. Ted Hesburgh Feb. 27 Lyons
Sr. Jean Lenz Mar. 6 Morrissey
Fr. Jim Burtchaell Mar. 13 Lyons
Fr. Dave Tyson Mar. 27 Morrissey

Reflection during a quiet Liturgy
Sponsored by Lyons and Morrissey
Liturgy Commissions

Palm Sunday Weekend Retreat March 29, 30, 31

Begin HOLY WEEK and the EASTER SEASON with a time away for prayer, reflection and relaxation. Leave Friday after supper for Crowe's House on Lake Michigan and return Sunday after brunch. The retreat will be conducted by Fr. Steve Gibson. There is a cost of \$7 per person. For reservations simply call the Office of University Ministry or drop by and leave your Name and local address and phone number.

Still Waiting:

We may wear ashes on our foreheads for a few hours, we may do some special penance or service for the days of Lent; we will soon be celebrating the Resurrection and "Alleluia" will be our song, but we are still an Advent People. We are still waiting in "joyful hope" for the coming of Our Savior Jesus Christ. It won't be long before the cold and the snow are gone, before we are filled with the splendors of warmth and summer, but we are still waiting, an

Advent people. Pentecost will fill us with the Spirit and we may be aware of the wonders that this Spirit can work within us, but we are still an Advent people, still waiting. The color of the vestements, the altar

decorations and the music

may tell us where we are in the Liturgical year. But our daily prayer reminds us that we are still waiting.

DELIVER US LORD FROM EVERY EVIL AND GRANT US PEACE IN OUR DAY, AS WE WAIT IN JOYFUL HOPE FOR THE COMING OF OUR SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST.



E. ZUTRAU