

GOSPEL PEARLS

Masks, tests, and social distancing

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Now on his way to Jerusalem, Jesus traveled along the border between Samaria and Galilee. As he was going into a village, ten men who had leprosy met him. They stood at a distance and called out in a loud voice, "Jesus, Master, have pity on us!" When he saw them, he said, "Go, show yourselves to the priests." And as they went, they were cleansed. One of them, when he saw he was healed, came back, praising God in a loud voice. He threw himself at Jesus' feet and thanked him—and he was a Samaritan. Jesus asked, "Were not all ten cleansed? Where are the other nine? Has no one returned to give praise to God except this foreigner?" Then he

said to him, "Rise and go; your faith has made you well." (Luke 17: 11-19)

The lepers we read about in today's Gospel observe social distancing around Jesus and He heals them anyway. One of them returns to thank Jesus, without the certainty of being tested first, and prostrates himself at Jesus's feet. Why didn't the others go back and thank their Saviour? Perhaps it was because they considered their bodies more important than their souls and the healing of the former as more important than the healing of the latter. The point here is that only Jesus can save us. Indeed, He is the Saviour of both our bodies and souls. A mask may or may not help save our bodies, but it certainly does nothing for the salvation of our souls.