A leper came to Jesus and kneeling down begged him and said, “If you wish, you can make me clean.” Moved with pity, he stretched out his hand, touched him, and said to him, “I do will it. Be made clean.” The leprosy left him immediately, and he was made clean. Then, warning him sternly, he dismissed him at once. He said to him, “See that you tell no one anything, but go, show yourself to the priest and offer for your cleansing what Moses prescribed; that will be proof for them.” The man went away and began to publicize the whole matter. He spread the report abroad so that it was impossible for Jesus to enter a town openly. He remained outside in deserted places, and people kept coming to him from everywhere.

Focus Questions

1. What did the leper ask of Jesus? What does the leper’s question show about His faith?
2. How did Jesus heal the man?
3. What did Jesus tell the man to do? Why do you think Jesus told him this?
4. What did the man do instead?
5. What affect did the answer to number 4 have on Jesus' ministry at that time?
Counter-Cultural

**Directions:** Read the laws concerning leprosy from the book of Leviticus. Then, using the questions below, reflect on how being a faithful Catholic in today’s world can be considered counter-cultural.

**Leviticus 13:1-3; 45-46: Laws Concerning Leprosy**

The LORD said to Moses and Aaron, “If someone has on his skin a scab or pustule or blotch which appears to be the sore of leprosy, he shall be brought to Aaron, the priest, or to one of the priests among his descendants, who shall examine the sore on his skin. If the hair on the sore has turned white and the sore itself shows that it has penetrated below the skin, it is indeed the sore of leprosy; the priest, on seeing this, shall declare the man unclean.

“The garments of one afflicted with a scaly infection shall be rent and the hair disheveled, and the mustache covered. The individual shall cry out, ‘Unclean, unclean!’ As long as the infection is present, the person shall be unclean. Being unclean, that individual shall dwell apart, taking up residence outside the camp.”

1. How is the reading from Leviticus related to the Gospel for this week?

2. To be counter-cultural is to act differently from the norms of society. How are Jesus’ actions in this week’s Gospel counter-cultural, especially considering the laws concerning leprosy from the Leviticus reading?
3. Although leprosy barely exists today, can you think of a group of people that we treat as “lepers” in our modern culture? Why did you pick that particular group? How have we made similar “laws” to the ones found in Leviticus 13? What does the Gospel message tell us about how we should treat these people?

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4. In many ways, living as a faithful Catholic is counter-cultural in our world today. What are three ways that being Catholic and living faithfully go against the norms of modern society?

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5. Given Jesus’ example in this week’s Gospel, do you think it is easy or hard to be a faithful Catholic today? Why or why not? In what ways does the Church support us and help us to live faithfully even when it is hard to do so?

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6. What is one thing you can do this week to stand up for the Gospel and live your Catholic faith in a visible way?

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