

[Spirituality](#)

[Pencil Preaching](#)



by Pat Marrin

[View Author Profile](#)

[patrickjmarrin@gmail.com.](mailto:patrickjmarrin@gmail.com)

[**Join the Conversation**](#)

Send your thoughts to *Letters to the Editor*. [Learn more](#)

November 10, 2020

[Share on Facebook](#)[Share on Twitter](#)[Email to a friend](#)[Print](#)



“Stand up and go your way; your faith has saved you” (Luke 17:19).

Titus 3:1-7; Luke 17:11-19

Veteran’s Day began as Armistice Day in 1918 at the end of World War I. It marked the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month of the bloodiest conflict in human history, which claimed 20 million lives, half of them civilian, and another 20 million wounded. It may have also seemed like the 11th hour of the human race but was hailed in the aftermath as the “war to end all wars.” Some historians say its harsh peace treaty terms were the seeds of World War II.

The church chose November 11 for the commemoration of St. Martin of Tours, a fifth century Roman soldier who left the army after he was baptized, becoming a pacifist and later a bishop. One legend tells of his wintry encounter with a poor man and how he divided his military cloak to keep him warm. He later had a vision that revealed that the poor man was Jesus.

Martin’s personal pacifism perhaps did little to stop war, but numerous other Christian conversions along the borders of the Roman empire hastened its fall by refusing to fight. A century after Martin died, Pope Leo I met and pacified Attila the

Hun from destroying Rome. In recent statements, Pope Francis has said that the church no longer supports the “Just War” theory because of the destructive nature of modern weapons. Many veterans hold strong views for and against war as an effective way to solve conflict. We honor them today for their service.

In today’s Gospel, Jesus meets and heals 10 lepers. One of them, a Samaritan, returns to thank Jesus, who praises him for securing an even deeper healing because of his faith. Because he understood that Jesus was LORD, this outsider was both healed and saved.

Perhaps it was this same kind of encounter with Jesus that converted Martin of Tours and made it impossible for him to ever raise the sword against another human being. Now he knew that Jesus hides among the poor and outcast of the world. His baptism affirmed his solidarity with others as brothers and sisters instead of strangers or enemies.

Advertisement