

I think we've all received phone calls ... almost inevitably at an inconvenient time ... during a meal, when we're doing some important work ... and the person on the other end of the phone wants to act like they know us. They call us by our first name and wait for us to acknowledge who we are ... then they launch into an endless rapid-fire monologue of how whatever it is that they are promoting is exactly what we need at just this moment of our lives.

Which has led me to never identify myself on the phone if I can help it. So when I answer the phone and the person acts as if they know me, I will only say one thing:

WHO IS THIS?

Who are you? It would seem that nearly every advertisement or commercial we view wants to tell us who we are, or at least who we are supposed to be. And if we're not happy with who we are, then there's a clothing line, or a line of cosmetics, or a brand of car, or something that will make us who we really should be.

In the first reading, from Genesis (17), God is speaking to Abram – who's name means “the father of Aram” which was where he came from, and God tells him his new name is Abraham, which means “the father of a multitude.” And a little further along, God tells the newly re-named Abraham that his wife, Sarai – which means “my princess,” and God tells him that her new name is Sarah, which means THE princess.

WHO ARE YOU?

I think for us, the question should be: WHO ARE YOU IN CHRIST? The Lord God exhorts Abram to “walk before him and be perfect” and in doing so, Abram and his wife Sarai end up becoming something more than they were before they walked with God.

In the Gospel reading (Matthew 8), Jesus is approached by a leper – a man with a horrible, disfiguring, and incurable disease. The man asks Jesus to cure him. And Jesus quite readily complies, and makes the man whole again. It happens so quickly that it almost seems too easy ... too matter-of-fact.

Walking with God will change you ... who you are ... it will change you into someone more than you thought you were before you chose to walk with Him. Walking with the Son of God, Jesus Christ, will make you whole again.

Let this be our prayer then, that starting today we might approach our walk with God ... our walk with Jesus Christ ... a bit more seriously. And in going deeper into this walk with God in Jesus Christ, we might be changed beyond what we are able to expect even from ourselves ... and in the same way, that we might be made whole ... healed ... of anything that limits or hinders us from being the person we were created to be by God ... in Christ ... in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit.