OK, who's got pets, or animals? Dogs, cats, cows, horses, pigs, chickens? Lizards, frogs, fish? Leopards?

Does anybody have a leopard? No? I hope not.

Today in the reading we hear about 10 lepers. A leper isn't a leopard, is it?

What's the difference?

A leper is sick. It's a disease that makes you look like a mummy. And it's not very common anymore, but 2,000 years ago it was pretty common.

And 10 of these sick guys come to Jesus, and Jesus heals them. But not right away.

First he sends them to work their way back into the community, and on their way ... they're healed.

And how many of these guys come back? All of 'em? None of 'em?

Right. One of them.

That's not very good. We should try to thank God for all the good things we receive, whatever they are.

Now, for those of you with animals - where do you take them when they're sick?

A Vet?

Today's Veteran's Day. Is that a doctor who helps sick animals?

No?

What's a Veteran?

Someone who served their country in the military - Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, or Coast Guard.

And, do you know what today is? It's the feast of St. Martin of Tours. St. Martin was a soldier in the Roman Empire back 1,000 and then some years ago.

When he was in the military, he wasn't a Christian yet. But he had a helmet, and armor, and a sword, and a cape ... and a HORSE. But Martin wanted to know more about these Christians and who Jesus was, because the Christians had a reputation for being loving, and serving, and caring, and helpful people. And he wanted to know about Jesus.

So one day, he was going along on his horse, and he saw a poor man who had hardly any clothes on. And it wasn't like he was going to the beach. It was cold outside. So, this man is freezing, and without even thinking about it he whipped off his cape ... WHOOSH ... and then pulls out his sword ... WHOOSH ... and cuts his cape in half and gives half to the poor man so he doesn't freeze to death.

Well, that night, Martin had a dream. In it Jesus came to him wearing the half of Martin's cape, and says, "Thank you, Martin, for giving me something to wear."

Because, in the Gospel, Jesus says, "Whatsoever you do to the least of my brothers, you do it for me." And so, when Martin helped the poor man, he was also helping Jesus.

So, if it wasn't enough of a miracle that Jesus came to Martin in his dream to thank him for his service to the poor; when Martin woke up, he looked at his cape - and it wasn't half a cape anymore ... it was a whole cape. Martin got two miracles!

Today being Veterans Day, and St. Martin being the patron saint of military members ... let's pray today in a special way for those people who are serving in our country's military, and who have served in the military in the past - the veterans. And let's pray that they be safe, and their families - spouses and kids - will be safe, and not miss them too much, and that God will bless them.