SPEAKER NOTES

WHAT IS LEPROSY?

Leprosy is a chronic infectious disease caused by Mycobacterium leprae. The bacilli attacks the nervous system, causing the extremities of the body to lose their sense of touch. As leprosy takes hold of the body, the person doesn't feel any pain. Cuts, burns and severe wounds go untreated. Infection sets in and, left untreated, the person experiences bone loss. The infection may be so severe that the limb or digit requires amputation.

The severe wounds of leprosy are unsightly. Individuals with leprosy are often forced out of their families and communities because the disease is intensely feared.

With the proper treatment, people can be cured of the disease and spared from a life of disability if medical help is received quickly. With your help, through World Leprosy Day, we can replace fear with hope for the future. Together, we can offer a healthy, happy life beyond leprosy.

DOES LEPROSY STILL EXIST?

Yes. More than 210,000 people are diagnosed with leprosy every year. It most often affects people living in poverty with little access to health care. While most of the world has forgotten about those affected by leprosy, we are focused on:

1. Diagnosing and curing those with leprosy
2. Funding critical research to end leprosy forever
3. Training health care workers to recognize leprosy to diagnose and treat early
4. Educating families and communities to reduce stigma of the disease
I see Jesus in every human being. I say to myself, this is hungry Jesus, I must feed him. This is sick Jesus. This one has leprosy or gangrene; I must wash him and tend to him. I serve because I love Jesus.

Mother Teresa

LEPROSY IN THE BIBLE

Throughout the Old and New Testaments, we see examples of people being ostracized because of leprosy.

The video features the story of Jesus healing a man with leprosy, which is found in Mark 1:40-45. Other passages include:
2 Kings 5:1-15 – Naaman is cured of leprosy.
Jeremiah 33:6 – Healing through God’s abundant grace.
Matthew 10:8 – Jesus asks us all to heal those with leprosy.

PRAY FOR THOSE WITH LEPROSY

The people we care for often ask us to pray for them. There are many things we cannot provide without the One true healer. Please remember to keep these children, women and men in your prayers and ask God to provide:

• Resources to reach people with leprosy and provide healing
• Comfort for those going through treatment
• Courage for people returning home after recovery
• A sense of belonging for those who have experienced hate and abandonment
• Strength and stamina for the doctors, nurses and support staff
• His love to extend from His people into the lives of all we serve
• Financial gifts to pay for the cure and care for those suffering from leprosy