

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

Save us, O Lord our God! And gather us from the nations, to give thanks to your holy name, and make it our glory to praise you.

PENITENTIAL RITE

Lord Jesus, you have shown us the way to the Father: Lord, have mercy. **Lord, have mercy.**

Lord Jesus, you have given us the consolation of the truth:

Christ, have mercy. **Christ, have mercy.**

Lord Jesus, you are the Good Shepherd, leading us into everlasting life:

Lord, have mercy. **Lord, have mercy.**

May almighty God have mercy on us....Amen.

THE GLORIA

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to people of good will.

We praise you, we bless you, we adore you, we glorify you, we give you thanks for your great glory, Lord God, heavenly King, O God, almighty Father.

Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son, Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father you take away the sins of the world:

have mercy on us; you take away the sins of the world, receive our prayer; you are seated at the right hand of the Father have mercy on us;

For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen



OPENING PRAYER

Grant us, Lord our God, that we may honour you with all our mind, and love everyone in truth of heart. Through our Lord Jesus Christ,

LITURGY OF THE WORD

FIRST READING *Deuteronomy 18:15-20*

A reading from the Book of Deuteronomy

Moses said to the people: 'Your God will raise up for you a prophet like myself, from among yourselves, from your own brothers; to him you must listen. This is what you yourselves asked of the Lord your God at Horeb on the day of the Assembly "Do not let me hear again" you said "the voice of the Lord my God, nor look any longer on this great fire, or I shall die"; and the Lord said to me, "All they have spoken is well said. I will raise up a prophet like yourself for them from their own brothers; I will put my words into his mouth and he shall tell them all I command him. The man who does not listen to my words that he speaks in my name, shall be held answerable to me for it. But the prophet who presumes to say in my name a thing I have not commanded him to say, or who speaks in the name of other gods, that prophet shall die.'"

The word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM *PS. 94*

R. O that today you would listen to his voice! Harden not your hearts.

1. Come, ring out our joy to the Lord; hail the rock who saves us. Let us come before him, giving thanks, with songs let us hail the Lord. [R]
2. Come in; let us bow and bend low; let us kneel before the God who made us for he is our God and we the people who belong to his pasture, the flock that is led by his hand. [R]
3. O that today you would listen to his voice! 'Harden not your hearts as at Meribah, as on that day at Massah in the desert when your fathers put me to the test; when they tried me, though they saw my work'. [R]

SECOND READING *1 Corinthians 7:32-35*

A reading from the first letter of St. Paul to the Corinthians

I would like to see you free from all worry. An unmarried man can devote himself to the Lord's affairs, all he need worry about is pleasing the Lord; but a married man has to bother about the world's affairs and devote himself to pleasing his wife: he is torn two ways. In the same way an unmarried woman, like a young girl, can devote herself to the Lord's affairs; all she need worry about is being holy in body and spirit. The married woman, on the other hand, has to worry about the world's affairs and devote herself to pleasing her husband. I say this only to help you, not to put a halter round your necks, but simply to make sure that everything is as it should be, and that you give your undivided attention to the Lord.

The word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

GOSEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia, alleluia! The people that lived in darkness has seen a great light; on those who dwell in the land and shadow of death a light has dawned. Alleluia!

GOSEL *Mark 1:21-28*

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark

Jesus and his followers went as far as Capernaum, and as soon as the sabbath came Jesus went to the synagogue and began to teach. And his teaching made a deep impression on them because, unlike the scribes, he taught them with authority.

In their synagogue just then there was a man possessed by an unclean spirit, and it shouted, 'What do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are: the Holy One of God.' But Jesus said sharply, 'Be quiet! Come out of him!' And the unclean spirit threw the man into convulsions and with a loud cry went out of him. The people were so astonished that they started asking each other what it all meant. 'Here is a teaching that is new' they said 'and with authority behind it: he gives orders even to unclean spirits and they obey him.' And his reputation rapidly spread everywhere, through all the surrounding Galilean countryside.

The Gospel of the Lord. Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.



[R]

NICENE CREED

I believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible. I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages. God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father; through him all things were made. For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven,

All bow for following three lines:

and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate, he suffered death and was buried, and rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church. I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

O Lord, we bring to your altar these offerings of our service: be pleased to receive them, we pray, and transform them into the Sacrament of our redemption. Through Christ our Lord.

AFTER THE CONSECRATION

The mystery of faith.

We proclaim your Death, O Lord, and profess your Resurrection until you come again.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

Let your face shine on your servant. Save me in your merciful love. O Lord, let me never be put to shame, for I call on you.

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focus on sunday

FOURTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME 28th January 2024

Jesus speaks the words of his Father today with an authority that made a deep impression on his listeners.



*His Authority,
His Ability,
and His Affection*



Mark 1:21-28 - The Holy One of God

Unclean spirits or 'demons' in Jesus's time offered an explanation for physical or psychological illness but having an 'unclean spirit' was a phrase also used to

describe someone who was opposed to that which was considered 'holy'. There is an irony throughout Mark's Gospel in that it is the 'demons' and not the disciples who speak the truth about Jesus: 'I know who you are, the Holy One of God.' While the man in the Gospel today speaks the truth, it is also an example of how it is not enough to *know* a thing. You can *know* the truth and still be opposed to it if it doesn't suit your agenda. The real example of faith involves trusting with the heart and responding with action to the truth. The demons are unable to do this. Jesus responds quite bluntly to 'the unclean spirit', literally telling it to 'Shut up' or 'Be muzzled'.

There are many 'demons' in our world that need to be cast out – hatred towards migrants and refugees, racism, war, discrimination of all kinds, greed, inequality, self-centredness. One message from the narrative today is that it is not enough to know a thing, you can know that Jesus is the Holy One of God, but faith is a way of living, not just believing. Jesus is the one who comes to restore and to liberate, he brings healing and frees people from that which tries to overpower them. As we journey through this week, we might ask ourselves what needs healing in ourselves, in our lives? What needs healing in society, in our church today?

'Once brought into the light of mutual love, demons lose their power and quietly leave us.' – Henry Nouwen

These reflections are extracts from *The Deep End – A Journey Through the Sunday Gospels in the Year of Mark*, Messenger Publications, Dublin, 2023. (Jane Mellett and Triona Doherty).