

FAITH @Home

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Diocese of Waterford & Lismore

Celebrating and supporting faith, hope and love in the heart of the family!



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Year B 4TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME - SUNDAY OF THE WORD OF GOD

"TO THE HEIGHTS" YOUTH EDITION AVAILABLE ALSO

Sunday Mass Readings

First Reading:

Deuteronomy 18:15-20

Responsorial Psalm:

Psalm 94(95):1-2,6-9

Second Reading:

1 Corinthians 7:32-35

Gospel:

Mark 1:21-28

'Here is a teaching that is new' they said 'and with authority behind it'.."



James Tissot, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons

Hear

Grab your Bible and look up the Gospel reading. Don't have one? No worries, you can find this week's readings online [here](#).

Check out [this video](#) on the readings for children.

Pray

In the Gospel today we reflect on Jesus's authority shown through His teaching and His healing power.

- What is the Holy Spirit saying to you through this piece of Scripture? How do these words resonate with you personally?
- We hear in the Gospel that Jesus heals the man with an unclean spirit. The truth is we are all in need of healing. Think of things in your life that make you worry or feel afraid. Remember that Jesus is always with you and he will never leave you.
- Ask Jesus to come and remove the worry and fear out of your life. Name the worry and fear to Him and remember his power to heal you and set you free.

Talk

In today's readings we hear about Jesus' preaching and casting out unclean spirits.

- Have you ever felt afraid, or that a problem was too big for you to fix? What did you do in that situation?
- There is no problem bigger than Jesus's power. We should always remember to ask for His help, His guidance and His healing in our lives.
- Take a piece of paper and write "Jesus" at the centre. Around his name, write down ways or times where he has healed you in moments of fear. Share with each other what comes to mind.

Family Challenge!

Each day this week, pick a different saying of Jesus, and read it as a family slowly and prayerfully, finishing with "He speaks with authority." e.g. John 14:6 *"I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but by me."* He speaks with authority.

HE SPEAKS WITH AUTHORITY

Today's Gospel continues our reading from Mark and describes what some believe was likely to have been a typical day in Jesus' ministry. Jesus and the disciples that chose to follow him in last week's Gospel arrive at Capernaum, a small village on the Sea of Galilee. Jesus teaches in the synagogue on the Sabbath. Mark reports that the people respond to Jesus' teaching with astonishment, noting Jesus' authority and contrasting it with the scribes'. Early in Mark's Gospel we already find evidence of the tension that will manifest itself fully in Jerusalem.

After Jesus' preaching, an even more astonishing thing happens. A man possessed with an unclean spirit calls out to Jesus. As we see in this example and throughout Mark's Gospel, the spirits and demons seem to know Jesus and are often fearful of him. In fact, they seem to understand Jesus' identity better than his disciples. As we will read again and again in Mark's Gospel, Jesus orders the spirit to be quiet and drives the unclean spirit out of the man. Jesus' ability to heal those possessed by demons is an indication of his power over evil.

In the prescientific age of Jesus' time, all illnesses were understood to be manifestations of evil and sinfulness. Our modern understanding of illness is very different. Possession by unclean spirits may have been a way to describe what we might call mental illness today. It may have even been a way of describing certain kinds of physical conditions. There is evidence that there were many kinds of exorcists and healers in first-century Palestine. Jesus appears to be like these healers, but he heals with unique authority and connects his healing activities with the words of his preaching.

We are missing the point that Mark is trying to make in this Gospel, however, if we try to explain away the healing work of Jesus. The crowds see in Jesus' cure of the possessed man further affirmation of his authority. Jesus' power to heal gives greater credence to his teaching. Jesus impresses the crowds through his words, which are manifested with power in his deeds. Mark's Gospel tells us that because of the authority with which he healed, Jesus' fame spread throughout all of Galilee.

Loyola Press - Sunday Connection

CHECK IT OUT: SAINT OF THE YEAR GENERATOR



We all need a little help everyday to become the best version of ourselves, and to follow Christ ever more closely. Who better to ask for help than the saints? Have you ever adopted, or been adopted by a saint for the year? Try the Saint of the Year Generator - maybe each member of your family would like a saint each, or pray for a saint for your whole family together!

Check out <https://thelittleroseshop.com/blogs/the-little-rose-shop-everyday-faith/catholic-saint-of-the-year> for just one of many word generator options.



DEALING WITH INTERRUPTIONS

In today's Gospel, Jesus is teaching in the synagogue. Teaching was an important part of His mission. His teaching is interrupted by a possessed man shouting out. We can imagine that Jesus' listeners were probably frustrated and annoyed by the man, possibly even fearful, and yet what Jesus did next showed that the moment was a Divine Encounter. He cleansed the man, setting him free from the unclean spirit. The onlookers were astonished, not now merely at the authority with which He taught, but also the authority with which He performed this miracle.

Sometimes we get frustrated by interruptions to our lives, to our schedules, to our plans. We can react poorly, even disrespecting those who interrupt us unfortunately, rather than asking God where He is present in this moment. Obviously we can't always stop what we are doing - sometimes we have places we need to be or work that needs to be done, but we can still allow the person to feel that they are still valued - that we'll get back to them as soon as we have time. Let's pray extra hard this week for the grace to be open to the spontaneous needs of others and to what God wants to do in our lives and on our path to sainthood through those interruptions!

This Week:

When faced with interruptions this week, stop and follow Fr Mike's three point plan:

1. God I know you are here in this moment
2. How are you present and active here?
3. I don't know the consequences yet but I thank you in advance for this.

Fr Mike: What to do when you get interrupted
Holy Interruptions: ALTR Worship

To the Heights Youth Resource also available



Family Prayer

Jesus, help us to believe completely and totally in You, in your authority in our lives and in the world today. Help those who do not know you or believe in you to find you, and find certainty in your authority. Amen

EVENTS

Songs of Praise: 28th January at 5pm in the Cathedral of the Most Holy Trinity, Waterford. Join local choirs singing Waterford's favourite hymns in aid of The Samaritans and Friends of the Cathedral Music which supports the cathedral music programme for young musicians

Family Day: Sunday 4th February in Holy Family Mission, Glencomeragh House, Kilsheelan, Co. Tipperary. 10am - 3pm. Bring a packed lunch. Donation only. Pre-booking is essential - email info@holymission.ie

Encounter: Fri 8th February. For young adults aged 18 - 35 in St John's Church, Parnell Street, Waterford. Starts at 8pm with talk, prayer and music. Finishes with pizza and chat! Newcomers always welcome

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