



THE LORD'S DAY AT HOME

THE FOURTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME (B)

Sunday 31st January 2021

If you are housebound or self-isolating at this time, please use these prayers to unite yourself with the worship of the Universal Church, and your own Parish this Sunday. If alone, read or say these prayers quietly to yourself. If with another, or in a family, someone should read the "leader" parts, and others respond. It might be suitable to find a special, quiet place at home for your Sunday prayers.

THE INTRODUCTORY RITES

Entrance Antiphon

A: 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.

Sign of the Cross

Leader: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

A: Amen.

Introduction

L: After the call of the first disciples last week, we are straight into Jesus' ministry of healing, with a dramatic miracle. What jumps out from this account, however, is not just the healing itself, but the question of *authority*. Jesus impresses and astonishes the people of Capernaum: they feel a new sense of the presence of God in their midst. We too ask that in our Sunday prayers we will have a constantly renewed awareness of the presence and authority of Jesus, who comes to be with us in our homes today. Let us begin by praising the glory of God, revealed in Jesus our Lord:

Gloria

A: 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

L: Let us pray.

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, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever.

A: Amen.

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

Gospel Reading

Mark 1:21-28

Jesus and his disciples went as far as Capernaum, and as soon as the sabbath came he 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.

A: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ!

Reflection

There is a lot of talk nowadays about the "erosion of authority." Whereas once upon a time, not that

long ago, certain figures in society had an "automatic" authority (police officers, doctors, judges, teachers, priests) nowadays people frequently question that authority, or at least do not assume it. We doubt our doctors' diagnoses, we see corruption in our police forces, we are suspicious of priests. These suspicions originate both in the "democratization of information" brought about by the digital information revolution, and also in the ways in which that authority has unquestionably been abused by some individuals. Nevertheless, we still need "authentic authority" – which is what Jesus displays in the Gospel today. We can trust the authority of Jesus. But recognising his authority should mean that we obey his voice (just like the unclean spirit!) – how much do we allow Jesus to teach us? We should also pray for all those who have authority over us: may they practise an authenticity of life, that will allow their teaching and guidance to "have a deep impression on us."

For our Younger Friends

Have you ever heard (or even said) these words: "You can't tell me what to do!" We recognise that some people *can* tell us what to do – mums and dads, teachers and police officers (see if you can add to this list) – but if our baby brother or sister tries to tell us what to do, I wonder what would happen! When someone can give instructions that have to be obeyed, that is called AUTHORITY. In the Gospel story today, the people recognise that Jesus "has the authority" to teach them, and to tell unclean spirits what to

do! Do you think the people will keep listening to Jesus? What about us today? Do we listen to Jesus, and recognise his authority – do we believe that he can tell us what to do?

If gathering as a family, perhaps now continue to discuss what this Gospel passage means to you. If alone, think about what key message you take from the Scriptures today.

Profession of Faith

I believe in God, the Father almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried; he descended into hell; on the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty; from there he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen.

Intercessions

L: Recognising the authority of Jesus, we turn to him now, offering all our prayers for the needs of the Church and the world.

Let us pray for the Church, especially that our leaders may manifest authenticity in their preaching and service. Lord, in your mercy:

A: Hear our prayer.

On this Racial Justice Sunday we pray for an end to all forms of discrimination and prejudice, asking that every human being may always be recognized as God's work of art. Lord, in your mercy:

A: Hear our prayer.

We ask that those afflicted by addiction, fear or anxiety may be set free by the Lord. Lord, in your mercy:

A: Hear our prayer.

Please add your own prayers for the needs of the Church, the world and your local community. You may wish to add particular prayers for family members, friends or neighbours in need at this time.

THE COMMUNION RITE

The Lord's Prayer

L: At the Saviour's command and formed by divine teaching, we dare to say:

A: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

L: O Lord, we bring to you our prayers and devotion; be pleased to receive them, we pray, and open our minds and hearts to the constant gift of your grace. Through Christ our Lord.

A: Amen.

Before Spiritual Communion

L: Loving Father, in you we live and move and have our being, and while in this body we not only experience the daily effects of your care, but even now possess the pledge of life eternal. For, having received the first fruits of the Spirit, through whom you raised up Jesus from the dead, we hope for an everlasting share in the Paschal Mystery. To complete this mystery of salvation, at the Last Supper he showed the fullness of your love, as he gave his Body and Blood for his people. Even though we are not in Church, and not able to receive communion today, we open our minds and hearts now to your generous love and the gift of Jesus your Son, welcoming him spiritually into our lives.

Spiritual Communion

A: My Jesus, I believe that you are present in the Holy Sacrament of the altar. I love you above all things and I passionately desire to receive you into my soul. Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally, come spiritually into my soul so that I may unite myself

wholly to you now and forever. Amen.

Pause for a moment of silent prayer and reflection.

Thanksgiving Psalm

L: O that today you would listen to his voice! 'Harden not your hearts.'

A: O that today you would listen to his voice! 'Harden not your hearts.'

L: 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.

A: O that today you would listen to his voice! 'Harden not your hearts.'

L: 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.

A: O that today you would listen to his voice! 'Harden not your hearts.'

L: 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.'

A: O that today you would listen to his voice! 'Harden not your hearts.'

THE CONCLUDING RITES

Final Prayer and Blessing

L: Let us pray. Nourished by these redeeming gifts, we pray, O Lord, that through this help to eternal salvation true faith may ever increase. Through Christ our Lord.

A: Amen.

L: May the Lord ✠ bless us, protect us from all evil, and bring us to everlasting life.

A: Amen.

L: Let us bless the Lord!

A: Thanks be to God!