

Homily - 31 January 2021 - Deut 18:15-20 - Mk 1:21-28

By: Fr. Paul Magyar

The gospel of Mark is the shortest and oldest gospel in the New Testament; only 16 chapters. Mark begins with the ministerial life of Jesus and does not include a birth narrative. The gospel was written around the year 65 AD to a largely Greek speaking audience. Mark is a unique gospel because it was written before the destruction of the Jewish temple in the year 70 AD and therefore the gospel places little emphasis on eschatological teachings; that is teachings about the end times. Mark's description of geography is quite off, Jesus seems to move from place to place rather quickly and he ends the gospel abruptly. However, the gospel of Mark places a large emphasis on Jesus' power through His word. Especially Jesus the exorcist who has power over unclean spirits.

The Word of God is Christ and it is the most powerful force that exists. God spoke the Word into the void, chaos, taimat and brought forth habitable order. The Word brings order out of chaos. When we are having a bad day and our life is in disarray we come home and speak to a loved one about the chaos in our life. The conversation and exchange of words involves Christ and we are able to place our life back into some type of order. We cannot make our problems disappear, rather we are now more confident to willingly deal with those problems and not be in despair.

Jesus is teaching in the synagogue in Capernaum. He moved from Nazareth to Capernaum, which is by the sea of Galilee. People are amazed at Jesus' teaching with authority and conviction, except the man with the unclean spirit. The spirit is unclean rather than evil. There is a difference. Unclean spirits refers to madness and spirits that are tormented, but not of evil origin. Keeping in mind that this event happens before the resurrection and therefore possessions were much more frequent in the world.

The possessed man identifies Jesus properly as the Holy One of God and demands a desperate answer from him. Jesus calms him down as he calms the storm; "be silent, be still". The unclean spirit comes out of the man as Jesus commands, without hurting the man. People are amazed at Jesus' authority in teaching, preaching, commanding and healing. This is why we always thank God for His Word.

Praying for all of you

Fr. Paul Magyar