



4th Sunday in Ordinary Time (Year B)



Mark 1: 21 – 28

The disciples went to Capernaum; and when the Sabbath came, Jesus entered the synagogue and taught. They were astounded at his teaching, for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.

Just then there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit, and he cried out, “What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are, the Holy One of God.”

But Jesus rebuked him, saying, “Be silent, and come out of him!” And the unclean spirit, convulsing the man and crying out with a loud voice, came out of him.

They were all amazed, and they kept on asking one another, “What is this? A new teaching – with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him.”

At once Jesus’ fame began to spread throughout the surrounding region of Galilee.

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Reflection:

Have you ever been put in a box? It might have been a teacher who talked to your former teacher and started treating you the same way or a classmate who had his mind made up about you from the very first time they met you. Jesus had the same problem. In telling the unclean spirit to be silent regarding Jesus’ true identity, he doesn’t want someone else set the limits on who he is and the authority he brings, so that he might have the freedom to show us who he is and what God came to do.



Table Discussion (at mealtime):

Just like the unclean spirit, we too might think we know everything there is to know about Jesus. How might Jesus be telling us to be silent so that we might be more open to letting him show us more?

Letting Jesus show us who he is:



Prayer Journal Activities for this week: (younger children can draw pictures)

Day 1: Spend one or two minutes thinking about Jesus' birth in a stable. Question: "How is Jesus telling you to quietly watch so that he might show you how much he loves you?"

Day 2: Spend one or two minutes thinking about the many hours Jesus' taught the people. Question: "How is Jesus telling you to quietly listen so that he might show you how much he loves you?"

Day 3: Spend one or two minutes thinking about the many hours Jesus spent healing the sick. Question: "How is Jesus telling you to quietly watch so that he might show you how much he loves you?"

Day 4: Spend one or two minutes thinking about the many hours Jesus prayed to His Father in Heaven. Question: "How is Jesus telling you to quietly pray with him so that he might show you how much he loves you?"

Day 5: Spend one or two minutes thinking about the many times Jesus spoke to the children. Question: "How is Jesus telling you to quietly come to him so that he might show you how much he loves you?"

Day 6: Spend one or two minutes thinking about the many times Jesus forgave those who wandered away from him, taking time to look for the one sheep that was lost. Question: "How is Jesus telling you to quietly come to him so that he might show you how much he loves you?"

Day 7: Spend one or two minutes thinking about Jesus' suffering on the cross. Question: "How is Jesus telling you to quietly watch so that he might show you how much he loves you?"

Day 8: Spend one or two minutes thinking about Jesus' resurrection from the dead. Question: "How is Jesus telling you to quietly watch so that he might show you how much he loves you?"

Day 9: Spend one or two minutes thinking about Jesus' ascending into heaven where he has promised to take our side. Question: "How is Jesus telling you to quietly watch so that he might show you how much he loves you?"

*For each day write a brief reflection on what you saw, heard or come to understand (younger children can draw a picture instead).



Daily Prayer that might be used prior to the Prayer Journal Activity:

Open my eyes Lord, so that I may see you.
Open my ears Lord, so that I may hear you.
Open my heart Lord, so that I may love you
Open my mind Lord, so that I may know you.
Open my arms Lord, so that I may receive you.



Parenting Corner:

Jesus taught with authority – an authority unlike the scribes. Jesus' authority is unlike any other, for his authority is the authority of God himself. As parents, you have been entrusted with a position of authority. For young children, your authority is seen as absolute. And, yet, authority comes with great responsibility; this includes the responsibility to know the uniqueness of Christ's authority and how he longs to extend his authority over us.



Parental Reflection Exercise: (Older teenagers may also benefit from this activity)

Jesus taught with an authority that many recognized as belonging only to God. When he spoke he did not interpret or offer commentary; his words were sufficient to impart truth, to heal, to bring to life, to forgive sin and to bring about a change of life (see also: God's word in the Book of Genesis: "Let there be light, and there was light"). In the same way, God's Word speaks to us, whenever we are open to his word in scripture or hear it re-echo in the life of the Church (i.e. "This is my body, this is my blood, Do this in remembrance of me.")

Reflection Question: "How do I understand God's authority? Does His Word instill healing, forgiveness, new sight and forgiveness in my life, or do I see his word as controlling, manipulative and an invasion on my freedom?"

Another interesting reflection for the Dinner Table (with older kids):

The unclean spirit is trying to tell Jesus who he is and what he came to do, not allowing Jesus the chance to show everyone who he was and what he came to do.

Have you ever felt others were assuming things about you based on your religion or background?

Have you ever assumed things about others based on their religion or background?

How do you feel about that?



The Word of God in the World Today (a bedtime reflection):

Read it slowly, line by line,

In the beginning, there was nothing,
No stars, no galaxy, no universe – nothing existed.

God spoke:

“Let there be light,”
And there was light.
Wow, imagine that,
The power of God’s Word.

(Pause)

In the beginning,
When God first created Adam and Eve,
They were lifeless,
Mere statues of earth and clay.
God breathed into them,
The breath of His Spirit,
And they shared in His life.
Wow, imagine that,
The power of God’s breath.

(Pause)

In the fulness of time,
God became man,
and lived among us.
When he spoke,
People were healed,
People’s eyes were opened,
People were brought back to life.
When he breathed on them,
People were forgiven,
People’s lives were changed,
People were given new life.
Wow, imagine that,
The power of God’s Word and Breath.

(Pause)

God continues his work today,
Jesus continues to be among us,
In his Word and in His Breath.
“This is my Body, this is my Blood.”
“Receive the Holy Spirit,
Whose sins you forgive, they are forgiven,
Whose sins you retain they are retained.
Wow, imagine that,
The power of God’s Word and breath at the heart of the Church today.