

4th Sunday in Ordinary Time

My beloved brothers and sisters, there have been a number of serious Catholic News Services who are reporting an increase of Demonic Possessions and Exorcisms. Although, sometimes there are extraordinary signs of Demonic activity, most of the time, the Devil tries to stay hidden, he does not want to be exposed in its insidious behavior.

The Gospel of St. Mark has no obscurity about the Divinity of Jesus and the reason for His coming: it is the beginning of the Good News of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. The word that is used is the Greek Word: Evaggelion. It means the Good News that is setting us free from the ancient evil one.

Imagine how the man possessed by the unclean spirit would have felt after this dramatic incident. Jesus was teaching in the Synagogue in Caphernahum with The Divine Authority which is His. No doubt, this Divine Power began to radiate out from Him to all around, just as it does in Adoration. The Gospel tells us that all in the Synagogue were amazed by His authority- they were all touched by Jesus. This poor man had been tormented by this evil spirit, perhaps for years. (We know that in the vast majority of cases; these things happen over a long period of time; and then, usually, a gate is opened by some act on the part of the person, and they allow this possession to take place!) However, it is the nature of possession, that the possessed man could take very little lulls amid the constant and recurring violent attacks by the demon; because the demonic is always about trying to destroy our God given human dignity! He had no way of living a normal and peaceful life, he had lost his gift of personal freedom. Jesus was his only hope; because Jesus is the authority and the power of God. It was for this very reason why God became a man in Jesus Christ!

In some way, we can all relate to this poor man, although we are not possessed; nevertheless, we have all experienced the limitations of our human dignity and loss of freedom in our struggles with sin and suffering. And, although these struggles, many times are hidden, nonetheless, they seem, at times to be overwhelming to us- until Jesus liberates us by His Divine Word, which is His Divine Power!

The man, as he was listening to Jesus, no doubt, felt a greater and greater agitation that day, because the demon felt so threatened by the Power and the Authority of the Divine Living Word, Jesus, who is God in the Flesh. He suddenly screams out, making its loathsome presence visible, and lashes out at Jesus. At a mere word, Jesus absolutely silences it and expels it, because the demonic has no power before the Holiness and authority of God in Jesus. The loathsome spirit violently throws the man to the ground in a fit of fury, but then leaves the man in utter peace. When he opens his eyes, the man and the entire synagogue knows they have encountered the wonderful mercy of God. Can you imagine the great gratitude he must have felt?

Jesus is our freedom! He gives us His own victory in the great spiritual battle within our lives and in the world. We cannot escape the battle, but we can avoid the attempts of the evil to snare us! There are four things we must do in this battle: first, stay close to Jesus in constant and daily prayer, especially the Rosary, and through the Eucharist. Live in the Truth of the Gospel and the Doctrines of the Church. Live in the Sacraments, especially the Sacrament of Confession which immerses us into the Truth of Christ which is His power to free us- the devil loves the darkness, but Christ is Light! Love God with your whole heart mind and soul and love your neighbor- do not stay in un-forgiveness and resentment; live in love. And finally, stay in the Immaculate Heart of Mary, who crushes the head of the demon. This is how Christ leads us into His freedom and light and love!