Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time Year B

You are the Holy One of God

First Reading: Deut. 18:15-20 I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their kin

Psalm 94: If today you hear his voice harden not your hears

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 7:32-35 I should like you to be free from anxiety

Alleluia Verse: Alleluia, alleluia. The people in darkness have seen a great light: a radiant dawn shines on those lost in death. Alleluia!

Gospel: Mark 1:21-28. What do you want with us Jesus of Nazareth?

Com. Verse: Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of Heaven. Blessed are the meek for they shall posses the land


Prayers of the Faithful

Celebrant: We are the community of believers that God has sent Jesus and the prophets to teach and call us back to right relationship with him. Let us now open our hearts and minds as we present our needs to the Father.

Leader: We pray for priests and religious who have given their lives in service of the Church (pause)

All: May their commitment to sharing God’s word and love inspire others to generously give of themselves.

Celebrant: We pray to the Lord

All: Lord hear our prayer

Leader: We pray for men and women who have selflessly given themselves in the Sacrament of marriage. (pause)

All: May their dedication to the their spouses and children provide living examples to the love that God has for his Church.

Celebrant: We pray to the Lord

All: Lord hear our prayer

Leader: We pray for single people who are discerning what their next step in life may be. (pause)

All: May they find in our community the encouragement they need to follow Jesus so to live lives that are worthy of his calling.

Celebrant: We pray to the Lord

All: Lord hear our prayer

Leader: We pray for millions of people that have been victims of modern day slavery (pause)

All: Like St Bakhita, may we stand firm in our resolve to create a slave-free world.

Please Pray For the sick: Les and Clare Fern, Margaret Schubert, Joe & Rosemary Valle, Br James Maher MSC; Josephine Di Lembo; Margaret Morrisey, Margaret McDonald, Margaret Heagney (Catherine Phillip’s mother) Loretta Grimster, Nancy Supple (Anne Davey’s mother)

OUR POPE SAYS: Pope Francis

“Our shared commitment to proclaiming the Gospel enables us to overcome proselytism and competition in all their forms. All of us are at the service of the one Gospel! To understand one another, and to grow in charity and truth, we need to pause, to accept and listen to one another. In this way, we already begin to experience unity. A shared Christian witness is very much needed in the face of the mistrust, insecurity, persecution, pain, and suffering experienced so widely in today’s world.” Speaking at the end of an Ecumenical Service for Christian Unity.
Living the Gospel: Jesus from Nazareth, what do you want with us?

Today’s encounter with Jesus leaves people gob-smacked and convulsing. We have competing voices: Jesus’ voice speaking with authority and those of the scribes who are like the babbling evil spirit. Jesus truth came from within himself, his experience. It is an authority the people begin to discover within themselves as well. Jesus confirms in people a sense of their own capacities, their own power to be part of a world that could be changed and that they could be part of that change. There are many parallels and lessons to be learned in this story about the exercise of power and authority within a Church community.

The historical community of the People of Israel encountered God on Sinai. Moses sees that this encounter is going to continue (First Reading). God would, as did Jesus later in his own life, raise up women and men in each age to speak the truth with authority. When Jesus spoke, the people saw one unlike those teachers whose word has lost their power, because they preached one thing but lived otherwise. These leaders are not unlike some church leaders today whose words have lost their potency. They have lost “street credibility” – the respect of the ordinary person in the street. Like the scribes, many Church leaders today have been displaced from their accustomed territory and clerical positions because they have been silent in the face of clear injustice and sexual abuse, neglectful of the needy, disrespectful of minority groups within their Communities and mostly interested in attending to their own status, maintaining their privileged position. Perhaps that is why Pope Francis, like Jesus, publicly challenged the Cardinals and Bishops of the Curia in his address to them just before Christmas where he spoke of the 15 ailments that afflict Church leadership in the Vatican.

It is not the task of preachers or leaders to manipulate or coerce people into seeing things ‘our way’ but to gently stir them or nudge them, by offering them a means of seeing things ‘God’s way.’ On the other hand, the true leader also recognizes that the Spirit breathes whenever and wherever it wills, and so we – those who claim to speak for God with authority – should be attuned to and listen to the voices of others. We must be listeners to the movement of the Spirit of God. Otherwise, we speak with a certainty that is not justified.

We may not talk about demon possession today but we are confronted each day with choices between good and evil, justice and injustice, peace and violence. In some circumstances it is more visible than others. These are the ‘demons’ that are alive and well: prejudice, racism, exclusion, poverty, personal and corporate greed.

Today, the courage of Jesus, who dared to call evil by its name in Capernaum, invites each of us to do likewise in our own homes, our cities and every other place where the challenge waits for us.

PARISH NOTICES AND COMING EVENTS

Collections: 1st Collection: $778.15
2nd Collection: $907.65 Direct Debit: $530.00

St Vincent de Paul: If you would like to volunteer with, or join, the St Vincent de Paul Society or need the Society’s help please call the Society on 8948 8100.

FEBRUARY CALENDAR

Sunday 1st: Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time
Monday 2nd: Feast of the Presentation. Anointing Mass at 5.30 pm Also bring your candles if you want them blessed.
Thursday 5th or 12th February at 6pm: First meeting for parents and children for Reconciliation.
Sunday 8th: Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time. Parish Pastoral Council Meeting at 10.00 am

It is also the feast of St Josephine Bakhita proclaimed by the Church patroness of HUMAN TRAFFIKING. From 4-5 pm there will be a Para-liturgy in her honour. We will pray for this crime against humanity to end.

Sunday 15th: Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time
Son of God: The Daily Gospel Year B-
www.catholic-thoughts.info/ebook/