

# The Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time

## January 29, 2012

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### THEME:

We are a blessing to others when we speak God's word with authority.

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### WORD:

Dt 18: 15-20; Ps 95; 1 Cor 7: 32-35; Mk 1: 21-28

### ORDER:

- *"Promote good order and unhindered devotion to the Lord."* (1 Cor 7:35)
- *"I want you to be free from anxieties."* (1 Cor 7:32)

### REFLECTION:

Today's Gospel passage illustrates the authority of Jesus. We see Jesus casting out an evil spirit that had possessed a man. All He did was to speak with authority and the demon came out leaving the victim unharmed.

In the time of Jesus, there was a great deal of diabolical infestation. The gospel accounts give us many instances of Jesus' power to combat Satan. Diabolical possession is proof of the existence of the devil, from whom all evil originates. Satan manifested his own power. But Jesus' authority over all things is supreme and even Satan's power is rendered helpless just by invoking the name of Jesus.

In our days, Satan is at work as hard as ever, never ceasing to impose his power over us, including our children. A grave commentary of the extent of the influence of Satan over our youth has been the recent spate of teenage suicides. These misguided youth allowed the devil to gain a foothold in their lives through their hopelessness and not knowing the love of Jesus and trusting in His mercy. Clearly, we have played into the hands of Satan by unwittingly opening ourselves up to his evil manipulations on us, making it easy for him to take control of our lives.

Like the man possessed by demons, we too have enough experience of being "possessed" by evil spirits manifested in addictive or obsessive behaviour like gambling, drinking, doing drugs, pornography, violent video games, *ad infinitum*. We still struggle with unholy thoughts and desires. We can be so possessed by hatred, pride, by having to be always in control. Jesus is the only one who can control, and cast out these powers that enslave us. To be victorious, we have to put all things under the authority of Jesus. We have to turn over to Him complete control over our body, mind and spirit.

Let us draw our strength from the Lord and from His mighty power. Let us always remember that the most loving, most powerful Creator of all things is using His supreme authority on our behalf. And, thanks be to God, it is by His authority that we are set free!

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### **DIRECTION:**

- Come into the presence of the Lord with thanksgiving.
- Listen to His voice. Worship and bow down, kneel before the Lord.
- Speak to the people of what the Lord has commanded.

### **GOD'S PROMISE:**

*"I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their own kin, I will put my words into his mouth and he shall speak to them everything that I command him." (Dt 18:18)*