

Mark – Week 3 – Jesus' Ministry in Galilee

I. WITHERED HAND, WITHERED HEARTS

Initially, the cure of the man with a withered hand appears to be just another marvellous healing. But for Mark it is much more than that. Done on a Sabbath, it is an illustration of Jesus' claim to be Lord of the Sabbath.

It is also the climax of a series of five escalating conflicts between Jesus and his enemies in Galilee.

Read: Mark 3:1-6

[1] Again he entered the synagogue, and a man was there who had a withered hand.

[2] And they watched him, to see whether he would heal him on the Sabbath, so that they might accuse him.

[3] And he said to the man who had the withered hand, "Come here."

[4] And he said to them, "Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do harm, to save life or to kill?" But they were silent.

[5] And he looked around at them with anger, grieved at their hardness of heart, and said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." He stretched it out, and his hand was restored.

[6] The Pharisees went out, and immediately held counsel with the Herodians against him, how to destroy him.

A. They Watched Him Closely

They (the scribes and Pharisees) watched Jesus closely to see if he would cure the man with a withered hand on the Sabbath, so that they could accuse him of breaking the law.

Scribal tradition permitted healing on the Sabbath only if there was a danger to life. Obviously, every healing Jesus worked, and

certainly this one, could have waited a day without danger to life. This, at least, is what his adversaries thought.

B. Healing on the Sabbath

"Is it lawful on the sabbath to do good or to do harm . . .?"

Jesus implies that doing **good** for the sake of mercy or necessity does not constitute a violation of the Sabbath. So he asks the question "Is it right **to do good or harm, to save life or to kill** on the Sabbath."

C. But They Were Silent

Those to whom Jesus addresses his question do not want to face the implications. They do not want to shift attention away from the Sabbath law to the more fundamental issues of good and evil. So they maintain a stony silence.

Mark gives us a glimpse of Jesus' emotional reaction: he is angry and deeply grieved at their hardness of heart. Jesus' anger is more than merely a human emotional response.

- "Anger" is often used in the Old Testament to describe God's holy indignation at human evil (Ex 32:10; Num 11:1).
- Anger, indignation, and outrage can be holy, and there are occasions where anger is the only Christian response.
- "Hardness of heart" signifies a stubborn refusal to be open to God.

D. Jesus Heals the Man

Jesus goes ahead and heals the man: he has done **good** rather than harm. The Pharisees are defeated and furious. From debate they turn to action and conspire to kill Jesus by teaming up with the Herodians – normally, their natural enemies, but now united in their opposition to Jesus.

Ironically, the Pharisees have chosen to do evil and destroy life by conspiring to have Jesus put to death. Jesus, on the other hand, has chosen life by healing the man.

E. Why Does Jesus Heal on the Sabbath?

Why does Jesus apparently prefer to heal on the Sabbath?

The Son of Man is the Lord of the Sabbath, and he exercises his lordship by undoing the effects of sin and inaugurating the new creation by which humanity is restored to the fullness of life that God intended from the beginning.

Jesus thereby fulfills the original purpose of the Sabbath to bring humanity into communion with God.

II. JESUS APPOINTS THE TWELVE

This section, beginning here and running through 6:13, continues a report of Jesus' ministry in Galilee.

For now Jesus continues his ministry of teaching, healing, and exorcisms in Galilee.

- But there's a new element in place: Jesus now begins to take steps to establish a New Israel and a new family of God.

From his many disciples and followers Jesus selects twelve and eventually sends them forth on mission.

In this period, Jesus experiences open rejection both with the scribes and by his own townspeople.

A. Choosing the Twelve

Jesus spent the entire night in prayer before selecting the apostles (Lk 6:12). The number of apostles is symbolic: as the 12 sons of Jacob were representatives of Old Covenant Israel, so Jesus gathers 12 patriarchs to found his New Covenant people in the Church.

Read: Mark 3:13-19

[13] And he went up on the mountain, and called to him those whom he desired; and they came to him.

[14] And he appointed twelve, to be with him, and to be sent out to preach

[15] and have authority to cast out demons:

[16] Simon whom he surnamed Peter;

[17] James the son of Zebedee and John the brother of James, whom he surnamed Boanerges, that is, sons of thunder;

[18] Andrew, and Philip, and Bartholomew, and Matthew, and Thomas, and James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus, and Simon the Cananaean,

[19] and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him.

B. The Mountain

Mark highlights the solemnity of this act by noting that Jesus went **up the mountain**, just as Moses went up Mount Sinai (Ex 19:3) where God gave the law and forged the 12 tribes of Israel into his chosen people.

C. To be Sent Out

And he appointed twelve, to be with him, and to be sent out to preach

- An Apostle is one “who is sent out” as a messenger or emissary.
- The commissioning of the Twelve is different from the call of the disciples.

Whereas the call to discipleship is a universal invitation to follow Jesus, the apostles are a special group chosen from among the disciples to participate in Jesus' mission in a unique way.

The purpose of the call is twofold:

- a) To be with him, and
- b) To be sent out to preach (proclaim the reign of God) and drive out demons, all by Jesus' authority – in his Name.
 - Those who proclaim and witness the good news must first experience it in the person of Jesus.
 - By speaking in the name of Jesus, we can set free those bound by evil spirits.

D. The List of Apostles

In all the Gospels, Simon Peter's name is always listed first among the twelve, signifying his role as their chief and spokesman.

Simon's name is changed to Peter. In the Old Testament, to confer a new name is a divine act expressing a change in a person's destiny and a call to a decisive role in God's plan of salvation.

For example,

- Abram becomes Abraham (Gen 17:5);
- Sarai becomes Sarah (Gen 17:15);
- Jacob becomes Israel (Gen 32:29).

Peter (Greek: **petros**), is a translation of the Aramaic **kepha**, rock, and signified Peter's role as a solid foundation on which Jesus would build his new community of faith.

III. JESUS AND BEELZEBUL

The kingdom on earth has begun to take clearer shape, but so have the powers of darkness. To their new confrontation we turn next.

After the appointment of the Twelve, Jesus comes home to the house of Peter and Andrew at Capernaum, which he had made his new home base.

Read: Mark 3:20-27

[20] And the crowd came together again, so that they could not even eat.

[21] And when his family heard it, they went out to seize him, for people were saying, "He is beside himself."

[22] And the scribes who came down from Jerusalem said, "He is possessed by Beelzebul, and by the prince of demons he casts out the demons."

[23] And he called them to him, and said to them in parables, "How can Satan cast out Satan?"

[24] If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand.

[25] And if a house is divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand.

[26] And if Satan has risen up against himself and is divided, he cannot stand, but is coming to an end.

[27] But no one can enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man; then indeed he may plunder his house.

E. Diabolical Accusations

"He is possessed by Beelzebul, and by the prince of demons he casts out the demons."

By now, Jesus' fame has reached Jerusalem. A party of scribes, sent by Sanhedrin, openly accuses him of being demon-possessed, saying his miracles are due to the power of **Beelzebul**, the "prince of demons."

Jesus responds with the logic of the obvious.

- His miracles and even his teaching have all resulted in the vanquishing of Satan's power.

- If Jesus were working through the power of Satan, then Satan would be destroying his own kingdom.

Satan is indeed the strong man, but Jesus, whom the Baptist had hailed as the “stronger one” (1:7), has begun to bind him as the prelude to despoiling his house.

F. The Unforgiveable Sin

Read: Mark 3:28-30

[28] "Truly, I say to you, all sins will be forgiven the sons of men, and whatever blasphemies they utter;

[29] But whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin" --

[30] for they had said, "He has an unclean spirit."

Jesus has addressed the accusation that it is through the prince of demons that he drives out demons, and he now addresses the previous charge that he is possessed by Beelzebul (verse 22).

This charge amounts to blasphemy, since it is equivalent to profaning the holy name of God. Jesus says that blasphemy against the Holy Spirit can never be forgiven.

Blasphemy: abusing God or His Name; uttering against God words of hatred, reproach, or defiance; speaking ill of God in any way (CCC 2148; 2149).

G. The Sin against the Holy Spirit

How can there be an exception in God's mercy? In actuality God's mercy has no exceptions, but our accepting God's mercy is another matter.

- The words “**blasphemes against the holy spirit**” mean defiantly denying the action of the Holy Spirit.

Those who refuse forgiveness will never have forgiveness. They are guilty of an everlasting sin if they erect a permanent barrier between themselves and God.

- Certainly the only sin that God could not forgive must be the sin for which one never asks forgiveness.
- Deliberately calling evil good and good evil puts one on the likely path of final unrepentance.

This is what the scribes are doing by accusing Jesus of being possessed by Beelzebul. It is a sin against the light and the truth. For they had said, ***“He has an unclean spirit.”***

The power of the Holy Spirit is at work in Jesus, but those who are opposed to Jesus attribute this power to an unclean spirit (v 22). They interpret Jesus' exorcisms as evidence that he is demonically possessed.

- The scribes utter blasphemy by attributing to Satan what is actually the work of the Holy Spirit.

IV. THE TRUE FAMILY OF JESUS

Jesus' relatives had earlier set out for Capernaum to seize him (verse 21), and now his mother and his brothers have arrived. While there is no doubt who the mother of Jesus is, the term “brothers” can cover varying degrees of relationship, as does the term “sisters.”

- These are Jesus' cousins or related kinsmen.

Read: Mark 3:31-35

[31] And his mother and his brothers came; and standing outside they sent to him and called him.

[32] And a crowd was sitting about him; and they said to him, “Your mother and your brothers are outside, asking for you.”

[33] And he replied, "Who are my mother and my brothers?"

[34] And looking around on those who sat about him, he said,

"Here are my mother and my brothers!

[35] Whoever does the will of God is my brother, and sister, and mother."

A. The Will of God

Whoever does the will of God is my brother, and sister, and mother."

- Obedience to the father is more important than being related to Jesus biologically.
- Baptized Christians are children of God and brothers and sisters of Jesus through the Holy Spirit.

Mark – Chap. 4 - Parables of the Kingdom

V. THE PARABLE OF THE SOWER

Why does Jesus meet with misunderstanding and rejection?

If the reign of God is at hand, why isn't its triumph more complete? Jesus addresses these concerns in parables about the "mystery of the kingdom of God" (4:11).

What is a parable? A parable is a teaching method with two purposes:

(1) Parables *conceal* Jesus message from the faithless, so that the stories and scenes from everyday life have no impact on those who reject him.

(2) Parables also *reveal* the mystery of Jesus mission to those who believe and embrace his message.

- A parable usually illustrates just one point, although some parables are partly allegories, that is, some details of the parable are symbolic but not all.
- Parables are stories that call for an interpretation.
- Why does Jesus, the Son of God, not have instant and universal success?

Read: Mark: 4:1-9

[1] Again he began to teach beside the sea. And a very large crowd gathered about him, so that he got into a boat and sat in it on the sea; and the whole crowd was beside the sea on the land.

[2] And he taught them many things in parables, and in his teaching he said to them:

[3] "Listen! A sower went out to sow

[4] And as he sowed, some seed fell along the path, and the birds came and devoured it.

[5] Other seed fell on rocky ground, where it had not much soil, and immediately it sprang up, since it had no depth of soil;

[6] and when the sun rose it was scorched, and since it had no root it withered away.

[7] Other seed fell among thorns and the thorns grew up and choked it, and it yielded no grain.

[8] And other seeds fell into good soil and brought forth grain, growing up and increasing and yielding thirtyfold and sixtyfold and a hundredfold."

[9] And he said, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear."

B. Interpretation of the Parable of the Sower

What is the central point of the parable of the sower?

Jesus answers that he's like a Palestinian farmer sowing seed with the same kinds of varying success as the farmer.

Pay attention

He begins by saying, **Listen! Look!** Or “**Hear this.**” He wants his audience to pay close attention - to both hear his word and to imagine the scene he's describing.

Jesus explains the parable only to his disciples when they are “alone.” The crowd “outside” is not privileged to hear its interpretation.

Jesus is the sower whose message (the word of God) elicits many different responses. The condition of the **soil** in each scenario determines one's reaction to Jesus.

Three responses prove unfruitful:

- Those like the **path** are corrupted by Satan (4:15);
- Those like **rocky ground** are hampered by weak and partial commitments to the gospel (4:17).
- Those with **thorns** are entangled in the distraction and concerns of the world (4:19).

Jesus graphic language (**devoured, scorch, choked**), underscores the opposition facing the gospel. In contrast, the **good soil** is receptive to God's word and yields an abundant harvest.

- Despite all the obstacles, the sowing ends up producing a spectacular result.

For a farmer working the fields of ancient Galilee, a **thirtyfold** yield is a plentiful harvest. **Sixtyfold** is a bumper crop, and a **hundredfold** is nearly miraculous (see Gen 26:12).

C. He Who Has Ears to Hear, Let Him Hear

Jesus ends the parable with another solemn call to attention: ***“He who has ears to hear, let him hear.”***

To **hear** means far more than to take in with the ears: it means to absorb, to appropriate deeply into one's heart, to allow the message to sink in and change one's whole life.

Jesus ministry has had its failures as well as its successes. His preaching has fallen on some deaf ears and has borne no fruit. He has been accused of blasphemy (2:7); some want him dead (3:6), while others think he's out of his mind (3:21), demon possessed (3:22), and a tool of Satan (3:22). Yet at the same time, ever increasing crowds are flocking to him.

D. Reflection and Application (4:13-20)

- How carefully do I pay attention to Jesus' words?
- If Jesus' preaching seemed to meet with so much initial resistance and failure, it is not surprising that the same is true for his followers in the early church. They were trying to spread the gospel of the kingdom in an indifferent and sometimes violently hostile society.
- This is just as true for us today, as it was then!

But despite the many seeds apparently sown in vain, God is at work to produce what will finally be revealed as a stupendous harvest.

There are basically two types of soil, fruitful and unfruitful. Which type of soil are you?

If you're unfruitful, why are you unfruitful?

- Have you never given the word of God a hearing?
- Have you fallen away you when the going got tough?

- Are your concerns as a disciple being choked by other concerns?

And if you are fruitful, how much fruit are you bearing?

- Are you yielding a thirtyfold harvest when you're capable of a 60- or a hundredfold?

VI. THE LIGHT THAT MUST BE SEEN

Jesus is continuing to instruct his disciples in private. He asks a rhetorical question: "Is a lamp brought in to be hidden under a bushel? The obvious answer is: "Of course not!"

- The implication is that the lamp is Jesus, who has come into the world to bring humanity the light of revelation.

Read: Mark 4:21-23

[21] And he said to them, "Is a lamp brought in to be put under a bushel, or under a bed, and not on a stand?"

[22] For there is nothing hid, except to be made manifest; nor is anything secret, except to come to light.

[23] If any man has ears to hear, let him hear."

A. The Function of Jesus' Teaching

Although the mystery of the kingdom is temporarily **hidden** and **secret** in parables, its true meaning will eventually be manifested and come to light.

B. The Measure of Understanding

Read: Mark 4:24-25

[24] And he said to them, "Take heed what you hear; the measure you give will be the measure you get, and still more will be given you.

[25] For to him who has will more be given; and from him who has not, even what he has will be taken away."

Jesus is telling his audience: "You profit from my teachings in the **measure** you pay attention to them - and if you do strive to understand, God will give you still more understanding than you could attain by your own efforts.

Whoever does not pay attention to Jesus' teaching will lose even the little understanding he has. God's revelation is a gift, but is a gift that must be freely accepted.

VII. A PARABLE ABOUT SEEDS

The next section contains two parables about the growth of the kingdom of God (26-32), and a concluding statement about Jesus' habitual use of parables (33-34).

- Remember, a parable is a mystery to be decoded.

C. The Mystery of Growth

Read: Mark 4:26-29

[26] And he said, "The kingdom of God is as if a man should scatter seed upon the ground,

[27] and should sleep and rise night and day, and the seed should sprout and grow, he knows not how.

[28] The earth produces of itself, first the blade, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear.

[29] But when the grain is ripe, at once he puts in the sickle, because the harvest has come."

Jesus compares the mystery of natural, organic growth to the expansion of the kingdom of God. The kingdom will one day be visible like the grain harvest, but the spiritual forces behind it will remain invisible. God brings about its growth, which at times is imperceptible.

- What a mystery is the growth from tiny seed to full-blown harvest! Such is the mystery of the kingdom of God!

- The harvest represents the day of God's manifestation and judgment.

VIII. THE MUSTARD SEED

What is a good image for the kingdom of God? How can Jesus help his listeners grasp some of the mystery? What are they expecting the kingdom to be like?

- A general on a white stallion leading an army against the Romans?
- An angel coming down from heaven with a fiery sword to destroy all the wicked on the earth?

The imagery of the kingdom that Jesus uses will surprise us!

Read: Mark 4:30-32

[30] And he said, "With what can we compare the kingdom of God, or what parable shall we use for it?"

[31] It is like a grain of mustard seed, which, when sown upon the ground, is the smallest of all the seeds on earth;

[32] yet when it is sown it grows up and becomes the greatest of all shrubs, and puts forth large branches, so that the birds of the air can make nests in its shade."

A. A Contrast

Once again, the earthly reality most suitable as an analogy to the kingdom is, of all things, a tiny seed.

For Jesus' Jewish audience, the idea of the kingdom as a seed must have been quite a surprise. A more predictable comparison would have been a mighty army.

The first stirrings of the reign of God on earth are small, taking place among ordinary men and women in rural Galilee. No generals

on horses - no angels with a flaming swords, just Jesus walking from village to village, healing and teaching.

IX. THE USE OF PARABLES

Read: Mark 4:33-34

[33] With many such parables he spoke the word to them, as they were able to hear it;

[34] he did not speak to them without a parable, but privately to his own disciples he explained everything.

If Jesus has spoken in parables, that is, in enigmatic speech, it has been an act of mercy as well as judgment.

Too much light at once might blind those who have at least a minimum of good will. The full meaning can be entrusted only to disciples - to those who are willing to commit their lives to Jesus.

- Understanding for the disciples does not precede but follows upon commitment.

X. LORD OF WIND AND SEA

This Sea of Galilee is known for the violent storms that can arise without warning. Jesus is sleeping in the boat when a violent storm arises. This exemplifies the perfect trust in God that is often signified in Scripture by a peaceful and untroubled sleep.

Read: Mark 4:35-41

[35] On that day, when evening had come, he said to them, "Let us go across to the other side."

[36] And leaving the crowd, they took him with them in the boat, just as he was. And other boats were with him.

[37] And a great storm of wind arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that the boat was already filling.

[38] But he was in the stern, asleep on the cushion; and they

woke him and said to him, "Teacher, do you not care if we perish?"

[39] And he awoke and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, "Peace! Be still!" And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm.

[40] He said to them, "Why are you afraid? Have you no faith?"

[41] And they were filled with awe, and said to one another, "Who then is this, that even wind and sea obey him?"

A. Jesus Manifests His Divinity

According to the Old Testament, only God has the power to subdue the raging seas (Ps 89:9; 93:4). The disciples, aware of this biblical background, are astonished at Jesus' power over the elements. This prompts their question **"Who then is this?"**

***Who dost still the roaring of the seas,
the roaring of their waves,
the tumult of the peoples*** (Ps 65:7)

At first the disciples think that Jesus has no concern for their safety or survival: ***"Teacher, do you not care if we perish?"***

- How often God's people reproach him in this way, from the Old Testament (Ex 14:10-11; Num 14:3) to this day.

Jesus, however, does not leave his disciples in their panic but immediately awakens and **rebukes** the raging elements.

- Their fear is a sign of a lack of faith in God's care for them (**fear** and **faith** are opposites 5:36).

Yet Jesus knows that a faith that overcomes normal human fears is not an easy achievement. His asking whether they do not *yet* have such faith implies that at some point they can.

B. Reflection and Application

Saint Augustine, commenting on this passage of scripture, said that, *“this episode at sea signifies the drama of the Christian life. All of God’s children embark with Christ on a life that is full of dangerous storms, especially in attacks from evil spirits and temptations of the flesh.*

We must learn to trust in Christ daily, since he alone can restrain those forces and bring us to the safe harbor of salvation” (see ICSB note on 4:35 to 41).

When the community or the individual goes through a storm and fears sinking, the disciple’s faith is challenged to believe not only that Jesus is present and is caring for his own, but that he is also Lord of the storm.

- His limitless power can meet and redeem the most terrifying disaster.

Authority over Nature, Demons, Disease

I. JESUS FREES AND RESTORES

This is Jesus' first journey into Gentile or pagan territory and it begins in the same way as his public ministry among the Jews - immediate confrontation and decisive victory over evil.

Just as the stilling of the storm showed his power over the forces of destruction in nature, so the exorcism of the demoniac shows his power over the forces of destruction within the human person.

The territory was dotted with caves used to bury the dead and were regarded as a favourite haunt of demons. The region was considered doubly unclean since it contained both tombs and pigs.

Read: Mark 5:1-20

[1] They came to the other side of the sea, to the country of the Gerasenes.

[2] And when he had come out of the boat, there met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit,

[3] who lived among the tombs; and no one could bind him any more, even with a chain;

[4] for he had often been bound with fetters and chains, but the chains he wrenched apart, and the fetters he broke in pieces; and no one had the strength to subdue him.

[5] Night and day among the tombs and on the mountains he was always crying out, and bruising himself with stones.

[6] And when he saw Jesus from afar, he ran and worshiped him;

[7] and crying out with a loud voice, he said, "What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I adjure you by God, do not torment me."

[8] For he had said to him, "Come out of the man, you unclean spirit!"

[9] And Jesus asked him, "What is your name?" He replied, "My name is Legion; for we are many."

[10] And he begged him eagerly not to send them out of the country.

[11] Now a great herd of swine was feeding there on the hillside;

[12] and they begged him, "Send us to the swine, let us enter them."

[13] So he gave them leave. And the unclean spirits came out, and entered the swine; and the herd, numbering about two thousand, rushed down the steep bank into the sea, and were drowned in the sea.

[14] The herdsmen fled, and told it in the city and in the country. And people came to see what it was that had happened.

[15] And they came to Jesus, and saw the demoniac sitting there, clothed and in his right mind, the man who had had the legion; and they were afraid.

[16] And those who had seen it told what had happened to the demoniac and to the swine.

[17] And they began to beg Jesus to depart from their neighborhood.

[18] And as he was getting into the boat, the man who had been possessed with demons begged him that he might be with him.

[19] But he refused, and said to him, "Go home to your friends, and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you."

[20] And he went away and began to proclaim in the Decapolis how much Jesus had done for him; and all men marveled.

A. Confrontation with the Demoniac

And when he had come out of the boat, there met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit.

This man comes to Jesus ***at once***, as soon as Jesus gets out of the boat. He lived in the ***tombs***, caves in the hillside used as burial places, and is possessed by an unclean spirit.

He possessed supernatural strength – no one could subdue him - and constantly mutilated himself.

B. He Challenges Jesus

"What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I adjure you by God, do not torment me."

Just as at the exorcism in Capernaum (1:24), the man fiercely demands, ***"What have you to do with me?"***

The demon is fully aware of Jesus' divine identity, but his use of the title ***Son of the Most High God*** is not a confession of faith, rather it is a desperate attempt to gain control over Jesus.

The tactic is futile. Jesus has already begun to pronounce the words of exorcism, ***"Unclean spirit, come out to the man!"***

C. My name is Legion

Jesus asked the man his name. To know the name of a demon was, in a certain sense, to have also authority over it. The demons answer is ***Legion***, a Latin term for a regiment of about six thousand men. This man is possessed by many demons.

At the plea of the demoniac Jesus sends the demons into a herd of pigs, which promptly jump into the sea.

D. Freedom and Restoration

- The man is redeemed. He sits fully clothed, and **“is in his right mind.”**
- He now wants to follow Jesus as a disciple.

But there is an element of the man's healing which has yet to be completed - his reintegration into his family and community; for they have yet to accept his redemption!

- So Jesus sends the restored man to his own people as a missionary and witness.

The story then is more than just another victory of Jesus over powers hostile to God.

- It is a lesson in what deliverance and healing is all about, not just for the individual but for the community.

E. Reflection and Application (*)

The Gerasene demoniac is a graphic example of the dehumanizing effect of evil and the tyranny it gives demons over human beings.

It is evident that what is needed for this man's salvation is not merely conversion and reform of life, but deliverance: the expulsion of evil spirits and their influence that only the Son of God can accomplish.

Although this is obvious in his case, it is also true to a lesser degree in every human life.

- Because of original sin, Satan has acquired a certain domination over all human beings (CCC 407; John 8:34; Rom 5:12-19).
- In all of us the image of God has been defaced to some degree.

Thus the Rite of Baptism is always preceded by an exorcism, banishing any evil spirits that may have insinuated themselves into a person's life (CCC 1237).

Jesus' exorcism of the demoniac gives us an insight into what his work of redemption has accomplished for every one of us.

(* *The Gospel of Mark: Mary Healy, pg 101*).

Preparation for Week 4

- Read Chapters 5 and 6 of the ICSB: *The Gospel of Mark*.
- Review Study Questions for Chapters 5 & 6 in the ICSB, p 53.
- Read pages 94-110 of *The Gospel of Mark* by Mary Healy.