

## Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time – 31<sup>st</sup> January 2021

Today's Gospel tells us that in Jesus' teaching is both new and has authority behind it. Jesus' teaching comes not from external sources or authorities, but rather from within. His words are not from other rabbis or teachers, but from the anointing of the Holy Spirit at his baptism – yes Jesus is the Christ the Holy One of God – indeed He is God – and so His words come straight from the mouth of God.

Jesus Christ - The Word – speaks and people listen.

Jesus Christ – The Word – speaks a command and healings happen.

Jesus does not dialogue with the unclean spirit in today's Gospel, who by the way is fully aware of who Jesus is, but in the power of The Holy Spirit Jesus vanquishes and removes the unclean spirit and restores the man to full health.

This is the first miracle in Mark's Gospel, the curing of the man with an unclean spirit as it is in Luke's Gospel and the first miracle in Matthew's Gospel is that of the curing of a leper.

In these three Synoptic Gospels, John's Gospel is rather different, we see Jesus' ministry beginning with bringing healing into a broken and wounded humanity. Jesus comes to heal, restore and renew; for if we are bound and wounded then we cannot live life to the full, we cannot be fully human in the way God had intended, as we read in chapter 1 of the book of Genesis.

Today we can still see the brokenness and wounds of people around us, if we have eyes to see. Jesus' ultimate healing won for us from the Cross is still available to offer to the world today if we have the heart to embrace what we see.

Who in our lives do we know to be struggling, to be nursing hurts and wounds; these are the people we can invite Jesus to be with. And just as He went into the synagogue and began to teach, command and heal, then He can do the same for you and me, and for those people who may need the healing of Jesus Christ this very moment.

Around the world there is a great need for Jesus to walk into people's lives and to offer a healing that is real and has authority – the authority of the Word of God.

We in our humbleness have to hand every situation of hurt and woundedness to Jesus – for it is His words that have the newness and authority behind them to change lives.

On this Racial Justice Sunday we could recognise the wounds and the hurts of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities who have suffered and been so injured, historically and in recent years, due to wrong words and actions from those who fail to see that we are all made in God's image and likeness. As we read in chapter 1 of the book of Genesis – this being the Word of God 'Let us make them in our image and likeness,' and so we are told by God, all people are born equal – but, is this the reality as we look around our streets, country and world?

Perhaps if all people were more aware of the power of their own words and actions then we would not so easily misuse any imagined authority that we may feel we have over others around us. Instead as we read in Genesis and see in Jesus' words and actions, we could heal and set free those Jesus puts on our path this week – or we could be even more humble and let Jesus and others help heal and free us from our hurts and wounds – now wouldn't that be amazing?