

## 10<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time "Thief in the House!"

Genesis 3:8-15, 2 Corinthians 4:13-5, Mark 3:20-35

We were **WARNED and TOLD ABOUT HIS PRESENCE** right at the beginning of Creation – he also shows up loud and clear at the End of the Age... If such is the case, **and it is**, then we can be assured of his ever abiding presence ALL THROUGHOUT THE AGES!!!

In our first reading taken from **Genesis**, the woman refers to him as ‘**THE SERPENT who tricked her!**’ As a result, his LYING, CONNIVING, and SEDUCTIVE WAYS earned him the following prophecy uttered from the mouth of the Lord himself: “**I will put enmity between you and the woman, between your seed and her seed — He will strike your head and you will strike his heel.**”

The image set before us is one of a **CATAclysmic Battle** between THE SERPENT and the SEED OF the WOMAN...

In the book of Revelation, the final chapter that's unfolding upon Creation *while WE AWAIT THE LORD'S RETURN IN GLORY*, interprets THE SERPENT as an image of Satan. And of course, the seed of the woman is the image of the Christ, the One who has come to earth in order to destroy the works of Satan by crushing his head.

Which lands us **RIGHT SMACK IN THE MIDDLE OF THE RING** of this week's GOSPEL PASSAGE! Interestingly enough, notice how the people in our Lord's hometown of Nazareth react to his so-called ‘battles with the **PRINCE OF THIS WORLD.**’

Our passage today doesn't mince words: "*his own family went out to restrain him because people were saying: he's gone out of his mind!*" In other words, if those closest to him reacted in this way when God walked the earth - HOW DO YOU THINK PEOPLE REACT TODAY to the ever active realm of **DEMONS**, possession, palm readers, **LUCIFER**, the occult, **WITCHCRAFT**, exorcisms, **BLACK MASSES**, Satanism, **DIVINATION**, and the like?

*(Which, by the way fall in the realm of **Grave Matter**. And so whoever participates in the areas of the aforementioned list with **Full Knowledge and Complete Consent**, what you have is the experience and the consequence of a Mortal Sin at work in your life. In other words, your soul is now separated from **GOD'S SANCTIFYING GRACE!** A condition that can only be remedied in the SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION. Confession drives evil out of a person's soul. Confession not only forgives, but **HEALS OUR SOUL AND FILLS IT WITH LIGHT.**)* but that's an aside.

How do people react in our modern day and age to the list I just went through?

Pretty much **THE SAME WAY** as those closest to He who came to reveal and expose the Devils works. With **incredulity, skepticism, a sense of intelligence, coupled with arrogant pride...**

We need to **HUMBLY PAY ATTENTION** to our Lord's words whenever we see and hear if him dealing with his arch adversary – and today, the Eternal Son of God, He ‘*who saw Satan fall like lightning from the heavens to the earth*’ shares with us some **INCREDIBLE INSIGHTS** that for the most part, go completely over our heads.

While those closest to him think **HE'S GONE CRAZY** by way of going around claiming to be casting out demons, the respected authorities of the day on the other hand, acknowledge that **THIS IS EXACTLY WHAT HE'S DOING!** But they add a twist to the whole thing by publicly accusing him of performing his work in the name of Beelzebul. "**IT'S BY THE RULER OF DEMONS THAT HE CAST OUT DEMONS!**"

Our Lord is quick to point out how **THEIR LOGIC is irrational and it SIMPLY DOESN'T MAKE ANY SENSE**. Because if he's casting out demons by the power of Satan, then that means Satan's kingdom is fighting against itself and any kingdom that experiences war within is simply going to fall apart!

And then from there, our Lord goes on to state **HIS POSITION** when it comes to the **DEMONIC REALM** with profound insight:

Things start going DEEP when our Lord says: "**No one can enter a strong man's house and plunder his property without first tying up the strongman; then indeed THE HOUSE CAN BE PLUNDERED!"**

THAT ONE SENTENCE contains within it a **PROFOUND TRUTH** with an unexpected **TWIST!** Because with those words, Jesus is exclaiming before all that **he is the thief who is breaking in to steal...** Let me say that again because this is not how we usually think of things whenever we hear the Lord speaking. Usually, we would think that Jesus is the homeowner and Satan is the thief. But that's not the way it is...

And that's because the earth **IS THE HOME** of Satan and the fallen Angels. We who live on earth are **always in danger of being tricked as Eve once was**, but that's not all: because of Original Sin we live with a hungering appetite for the things of the flesh and the pleasures of the world – which means that most of the time, human beings are **easily influenced by the Home Owner of this world** – Satan – and his tenants: the fallen Angels!

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There's a legend out there that depicts Lucifer having a conversation with his demons about putting into effect the most effective strategy for securing the damnation of human souls, One of the demons says, "**I've got the plan, master. When I get on the earth and take charge of people's thinking, I'll tell them there's no heaven.**"

The Master of the Household responds with: "**Ah, they'll never believe that. This Book of Truth is FULL OF MESSAGES ABOUT THE HOPE OF HEAVEN through sins forgiven. They won't believe that. They know there's a glory yet future.**"

From the other side of the room is heard: "**I've got the plan. I'll tell 'em there's no hell.**" "**That's NO GOOD,**" he says. "**For while Jesus was on earth, He talked more about hell than of heaven!!! They know in their hearts that their wrongs will have to be taken care of in some way.**"

That's when the most brilliant of them all pipes in and says: "**I know the answer. I'LL JUST TELL THEM THAT THERE'S NO HURRY.**" And that's the one Satan chose...

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We live **UNDER THE ILLUSION OF TIME** and we believe it! Amazing how the last two funerals I will have celebrated within a week one from the other, neither of the deceased had any idea hours before that THEIR END was at hand. Our Lord warns us in Revelation chapter 16 verse 15: "Look, I WILL COME LIKE A THIEF! Blessed is the one who stays awake and has kept his clothes on so that he does not go out naked and expose his shame."

Blessed are **those who believe**, for our Lord has made it clear that HE IS THE THIEF that has broken in in order to steal from the strongman. The **strong man is the devil** and **JESUS IS THE THIEF**: the goods that he has come to steal from the devil are **the souls of those who are possessed and under the influence of the demonic**. Whenever our Lord performs exorcisms, he is taking back the souls that Satan has bound and he does so by tying up Satan first. **That's what his EXORCISTIC MINISTRY is all about! It's the binding up of the strongman. Restraining the devil's power and winning back souls from him...**

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That being said, our Lord knows that **THE DEVIL'S MAIN TRICK** is to make people think they are unworthy of God's forgiveness. This is the biggest lie that demons whisper into our ears.

Our Lord handles this one by way of clearly stating what is the one and only UNFORGIVABLE SIN.

**"Whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit can never have forgiveness, but IS GUILTY OF AN ETERNAL SIN."**

Thankfully for us, **St. John Paul II** wrote an **AUTHORITATIVE PAPAL INTERPRETATION** concerning the sin against the Holy Spirit. Here's what he has to say in his encyclical entitled: "*Dominum et Vivificantem.*"

“[B]lasphe~~m~~y... consists in the refusal to accept the salvation which God offers to man through the Holy Spirit... [T]he blasphemy against the Holy Spirit consists precisely in the **RADICAL REFUSAL TO ACCEPT THIS FORGIVENESS...** in other words to the radical refusal to be converted... **Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, then, is the sin committed by the person who claims to have a “right” to persist in evil**— in any sin at all—and who thus rejects Redemption.”

All summed up, THE ONLY SIN that can't be forgiven is the sin that **REFUSES TO ACCEPT FORGIVENESS** because of a **HARDNESS OF HEART...** **Sadly, ‘hardened hearts’ pretty much sums up the plight of our Modern World!!**

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We're like – **HANGING OVER A PRECIPICE** these days because in our day and age we've **lost the very sense of SIN, we've lost the sense of Satan and the demonic realm** – and we are on the edge of losing the sense of God's existence!!!

**REMEMBER this:** the battle between ***JESUS THE THIEF*** and ***SATAN THE HOMEOWNER*** is real and its cataclysmic!!! and that's because it's over our Immortal Souls.

As Psalm 95 warns us: "**If today you hear His Voice – do not harden your hearts...**"