

## **Homily For Tuesday of the 22nd Week of Ordinary Time- Year II**

### **St Peter's 8:30am Mass - September 1, 2020**

**1 Cor 2:10-16** "We have received not the spirit of the world but the Spirit that is from God."

**Psalm 145:8-14** "Your works give thanks to you. Your faithful make known your mighty deeds."

**Luke 4:31-37** "With authority and power he commands the unclean spirits, and out they come."

### **What the Spirit Reveals**

#### **Introduction**

When you go to the Sea of Galilee today, usually on a tour bus, you come eventually to a modern sign on a gate, which identifies that first century city called Capernaum, with both its modern church, but also its preserved ancient synagogue. Now, every time I read in the Gospels: "Jesus went down to Capernaum in Galilee," the story of the event that follows suddenly becomes intensely real in a way it did not before I was there.

We have the worldly evidence that the man Jesus truly walked and spoke and healed and cast out demonic spirits. This reality, this historical truth, prepares us to receive the further reality and truth that the same man, with the Holy Spirit of God operating fully in him, refused worldly security and safety to offer himself as a living sacrifice to rescue us from spiritual death.

#### **Jesus**

The daily readings have quite suddenly this week transported us into Luke's insight into the Good News of Jesus Christ. We have bypassed the infancy narratives, saving them for another time, and moved directly into his ministry. The central focus of Jesus' ministry is to reclaim the world for the kingdom and the reign of God. Now, in the City of Capernaum, the battle begins. This exorcism, and the cure that follows it, take place on the Sabbath. God's kingdom, the Day of the Lord, is revealed, literally, on the day of the Lord.

## Paul

St. Paul's writing can be confusing, but it can also take us deep into the heart of faith. This is his argument. Our human spirit, our soul, understands something about our natural and physical human life. But, if we want to know about God, we need the Holy Spirit, which understands the depths of God. We cannot access this wisdom on our own, but we have access to it through baptism and through faith.

The natural human person naturally looks at things materially. Most of the time, this is adequate to get by in the world. But, when we contemplate the meaning and purpose of our lives, it leaves us sadly impoverished.

Without the Spirit and wisdom of God, the crucifixion looked like an absolute failure. And it could only have been perpetrated only by those whose wisdom failed to enlighten them about the identity of the one they crucified. That is why Jesus could say: They do not know what they are doing. For us now, failure to identify the wisdom of God in Christ crucified reveals the absence of Spirit of God.

But when we judge things with the spirit of God, a spiritual dimension opens up to us. The Eucharist makes little sense without this divine understanding. But with the mind and heart of Christ, we are able to see how his Spirit is not relegated to the past but remains with us in a profound and ever new way.

Paul suggests there are those who are spiritual and those who are unspiritual. And yet, so many today will tell you that they are spiritual but not religious. On the one hand, this statement recognizes that we do have a spiritual aspect to our nature. On the other hand, this closes off the door to receiving the Spirit of God. I have my spirit, by which I understand and live my life, but I refuse God's Spirit, which would give me a profound understanding of the deeper meaning of my life.

The unclean spirit has a spiritual nature. This allows it to recognize Jesus. It can do that much but it cannot conform itself to the mind of Christ. It lives in terror of that Spirit. It is spiritual but not religious.

## **Call To Action**

What is the meaning of your life and mine? The spirit of the world leaves a spiritual vacuum. It can only absorb the wisdom of the world. That wisdom says, for example, that we will be saved by a vaccine. No, we won't. That wisdom, that human achievement, will not save me from my broken human nature.

The spirit and wisdom of the world acting in me hates the idea that I am a hopeless sinner in absolute need of God's mercy. Only with the mind of Christ can I admit that sad reality but, at the same time, have access to the astounding reality that God would not leave me alone with my sin. He has come for me. He has given himself, not just for me, but for all who would allow themselves to be pervaded by the Spirit of God and the mind of Christ.

We have transitioned from a spring and summer like no other and will probably experience a fall like no other. In our daily Good News we have transitioned from Matthew to Luke. Let us now transition from the spirit of the world to the Spirit which reveals all things: Who we are, what is the meaning of our life on this earth, who God is and what gifts we have received by the Spirit of God. Let us do all we can to receive the mind of Christ.

## **Key Passages**

**1 Corinthians:** *The Spirit searches even the depths of God ... A human being knows what is truly human through the spirit within ... We have received not the spirit of the world but the Spirit that is from God, so that we may understand the gifts bestowed on us ... We are not taught by human wisdom but by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual things to those who are spiritual. Those who are unspiritual do not receive the gifts of God's Spirit, which are spiritually discerned ... We have the mind of Christ.*

**Psalms:** *All your works shall give thanks to you, O Lord, and all your faithful shall bless you ... Your faithful make known to all people your mighty deeds.*

**Luke:** *Jesus went down to Capernaum in Galilee and was teaching them on the Sabbath. They were astounded because he spoke with authority ... The spirit of an unclean demon cried out: let us alone, Jesus of Nazareth! Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are, the Holy One of God. But Jesus rebuked him, saying: Be silent, and come out of him! They were all amazed: With authority and power he commands the unclean spirits, and out they come!*