

June 10, 2018
10th Sunday in Ordinary Time
Mark 3:20-35

He [Jesus] came home with his disciples. Again the crowd gathered, making it impossible for them even to eat. When his relatives heard of this they set out to seize him, for they said, "He is out of his mind." The scribes who had come from Jerusalem said, "He is possessed by Beelzebul," and "By the prince of demons he drives out demons."

Summoning them, he began to speak to them in parables, "How can Satan drive out Satan? If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. And if a house is divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand. And if Satan has risen up against himself and is divided, he cannot stand; that is the end of him. But no one can enter a strong man's house to plunder his property unless he first ties up the strong man. Then he can plunder the house. Amen, I say to you, all sins and all blasphemies that people utter will be forgiven them. But whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will never have forgiveness, but is guilty of an everlasting sin." For they had said, "He has an unclean spirit."

His mother and his brothers arrived. Standing outside they sent word to him and called him. A crowd seated around him told him, "Your mother and your brothers and your sisters are outside asking for you." But he said to them in reply, "Who are my mother and my brothers?" And looking around at those seated in the circle he said, "Here are my mother and my brothers. For whoever does the will of God is my brother and sister and mother."

Background:

The opening verses of the third chapter of Mark's gospel describe Jesus entering a synagogue on a sabbath and encountering a man with a withered hand. The officials are described as watching Jesus to see if he would cure the man, so that they would have something for which they could accuse him. Jesus called the man to the front and then asked the officials if it was lawful to do good on the sabbath rather than to do evil. When they did not respond, Jesus is described as becoming angry and grieving the hardness of their hearts. Jesus told the man to stretch out his hand and when he did so it was restored. Mark then says, "the Pharisees went out and immediately took counsel with the Herodians against him to put him to death." (Mark 3:1-6)

Mark then reports that Jesus withdrew with his disciples toward the sea and that large crowds of people followed him. They came from Galilee, Judea, and Jerusalem, and from the surrounding area. The crowds were so large that Jesus told his disciples to have a boat ready so that he could avoid being crushed by the crowd. Mark also reports that whenever unclean spirits saw him they would fall down before him and shout, "You are the Son of God." (Mark 3:11b)

Mark's text immediately preceding the text for this Sunday tells of Jesus summoning his followers, selecting twelve to be with him and to preach and to have authority to drive out demons. Mark names those disciples, and then verse 20 states that Jesus returned home, and the rest of today's gospel text follows.

Reflection Questions:

1. My relationship with my family has been mostly...
2. The time I brought the most bewilderment to my family was...
3. What are some reasons why Jesus' relatives might say that "He is out of his mind?"
4. If I had been there when the scribes said that Jesus was able to cast out demons because Jesus himself was possessed by a demon, I would have liked to...
5. If I had been there when Jesus said "Here are my mother and my brothers. For whoever does the will of God is my brother and sister and mother," I would have thought to myself ...

6. After prayerful reading of this gospel text, can you talk with Jesus about you are feeling about your relationship to Jesus and Jesus' relationship to you, or about some other awareness that has arisen within you?

Comments please: I tried a different style of reflection questions this week. If you have some time, please let me know if you found this style of questions helpful?

The gospel background and reflection questions are written by Fr. Paul Gallagher, OFM. They are edited by Sister Anne Marie Lom, OSF and Joe Thiel. The excerpts from the Sunday readings are prepared by Joe Thiel. To be added to the distribution list, send your name and email address to annemarie.lom@gmail.com

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Excerpts from the readings for June 10, 2018, the Tenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

After Adam had eaten of the tree, the Lord God called to the man and asked, "Where are you?" He answered, "I heard you in the garden; but I was afraid, because I was naked, so I hid myself." Then he asked, "Who told you that you were naked? You have eaten, then, from the tree of which I had forbidden you to eat!" The man replied, "The woman gave me fruit from the tree, and so I ate it." The Lord God asked the woman, "Why did you do such a thing?" The woman answered, "The serpent tricked me into it, so I ate it." The Lord God said to the serpent: "Because you have done this, you shall be banned from all the animals and from all the wild creatures; on your belly shall you crawl, and dirt shall you eat all the days of your life. I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will strike at your head, while you strike at his heel."

With the Lord there is mercy, and fullness of redemption.

Out of the depths I cry to you, Lord, let your ears be attentive to my voice in supplication.

If you mark iniquities, Lord, who can stand? But with you is forgiveness, that you may be revered.

I trust in the Lord; more than sentinels wait for the dawn, let Israel wait for the Lord.

For with the Lord is kindness and he will redeem Israel from all their iniquities.

Brothers and sisters: Since we have the same spirit of faith, according to what is written, we too believe and therefore we speak, knowing that the one who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus and place us with you in his presence. Everything indeed is for you, so that the grace bestowed in abundance may cause the thanksgiving to overflow for the glory of God. We are not discouraged;

although our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day. This momentary light affliction is producing an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, as we look to what is unseen; what is seen is transitory, but what is unseen is eternal. We know that if our earthly dwelling should be destroyed, we have a building from God, a dwelling not made with hands, eternal in heaven.

Jesus came home with his disciples. The crowd gathered, making it impossible for them even to eat. When his relatives heard of this they said, "He is out of his mind." The scribes who had come from Jerusalem said, "He is possessed by Beelzebul," and "By the prince of demons he drives out demons." Summoning them, he spoke to them in parables, "How can Satan drive out Satan? If a kingdom is divided against itself, it cannot stand. If a house is divided against itself, that house will not stand. And if Satan has risen up against himself, that is the end of him. No one can enter a strong man's house to plunder his property unless he first ties up the strong man. Then he can plunder the house. All sins and all blasphemies that people utter will be forgiven them. But whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit is guilty of an everlasting sin." For they had said, "He has an unclean spirit." His mother and his brothers arrived. Standing outside they sent word to him and called him. A crowd seated around him told him, "Your mother and your brothers and your sisters are outside asking for you." But he said to them in reply, "Who are my mother and my brothers?" And looking around at those seated in the circle he said, "Here are my mother and my brothers. For whoever does the will of God is my brother and sister and mother."

Excerpts from Genesis 3:9-15; Psalm 130:1-8; 2 Corinthians 4:13-5:1; and Mark 3:20-35