

January 31, 2021

Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Dt 18:15-20

1 Cor 7:32-35

Mk 1:21-28

GROW: When was the last time you were “astonished” and “amazed”? Parents might point to the birth of their child. Space enthusiasts might recall Neil Armstrong’s walk on the moon. Perhaps we felt that sense of amazement the first time we saw the Grand Canyon or another natural wonder. For the people of Capernaum, Jesus had that effect. He taught with authority. He commanded an unclean spirit. In our modern society with the constant bombardment of news and social media, it can be easy to become numb to the wonder that surrounds us. Perhaps we think we’ve seen it all. Even Jesus and the words that turned ordinary people into extraordinary disciples of the early Church can be something we take for granted or only think about for 20 minutes on Sunday. Our Gospel challenges us to quiet the noise, and Paul encourages us to seek “adherence to the Lord without distraction.” Let us pray that the Lord rekindles our faith, so that we may hear his words again as if for the first time and engage ourselves anew in living according to his teachings.

GO: It is very hard to keep exciting news to ourselves. We have an innate desire to share important information and extraordinary events with those whom we love. It could be the call to parents to announce an engagement. Or perhaps telling a friend that you have landed a job or been accepted to college. While these milestones are significant, they pale in comparison to what Jesus has done for us. Through him, we have experienced God’s love, mercy, and redemption, not to mention the direction and means to attain a good life: on earth and with him forever in heaven. Why not share that Good News as well? We don’t have to stand on a street corner to be effective. We can simply let our faith lives enter our conversations, just as our work and other interests do. It could be as simple as, “our priest said something Sunday that really stuck with me,” or “I just finished a remarkable book about Dorothy Day.” As we begin to talk about our faith and listen to others share their insights, we not only grow closer to one another, but can grow in faith together.

WITNESS: Today’s psalm struck a chord: “If today you hear his voice, harden not your hearts.” Next Sunday, make a conscious effort to listen to the readings and music with an open heart (and ears). If something strikes you, consider sharing that with others – be it around the dinner table, on a walk with friends, or during a video call.