

Jesus Gave Them Authority over Sickness and Unclean Spirits

SUNDAY 14 JULY 2024

GOSPEL READING: Mark 6:7-13

7 And he called to him the twelve, and began to send them out two by two, and gave them authority over the unclean spirits. 8 He charged them to take nothing for their journey except a staff; no bread, no bag, no money in their belts; 9 but to wear sandals and not put on two tunics. 10 And he said to them, "Where you enter a house, stay there until you leave the place. 11 And if any place will not receive you and they refuse to hear you, when you leave, shake off the dust that is on your feet for a testimony against them." 12 So they went out and preached that men should repent. 13 And they cast out many demons, and anointed with oil many that were sick and healed them.

Meditation: What kind of authority and power does the Lord want you to exercise on his behalf? Jesus gave his apostles both the power and the authority to speak and to act in his name. He commanded them to do the works which he did - to heal the sick, to cast out evil spirits, and to speak the word of God - the good news of the gospel which they received from Jesus. When Jesus spoke of power and authority, he did something unheard of. He wedded power and authority with self-sacrificing love and humility. The "world" and the "flesh" seek power for selfish gain. Jesus teaches us to use it for the good of our neighbour.

Why does Jesus tell the apostles to "travel light" with little or no provision? "Poverty of spirit" frees us from greed and preoccupation with our possessions and makes ample room for God's provision. The Lord wants his disciples to be dependent on him and not on themselves. He wills to work in and through each of us for his glory. Are you ready to use the spiritual authority and power which God wishes you to exercise on his behalf? The Lord entrusts us with his gifts and talents. Are you eager to place yourself at his service, to do whatever he bids you, and to witness his truth and saving power to whomever he sends you?

Psalm 85:8-13

8 Let me hear what God the LORD will speak, for he will speak peace to his people, to his saints, to those who turn to him in their hearts.

9 Surely his salvation is at hand for those who fear him, that glory may dwell in our land.

10 Steadfast love and faithfulness will meet; righteousness and peace will kiss each other.

11 Faithfulness will spring up from the ground, and righteousness will look down from the sky.

12 Yes, the LORD will give what is good, and our land will yield its increase.

13 Righteousness will go before him, and make his footsteps a way.

Daily Quote from the Early Church Fathers: *Jesus gives them power to heal and cast out evil spirits*, by Cyril of Alexandria (376-444 AD)

"The grace bestowed upon the holy apostles is worthy of all admiration. But the bountifulness of the Giver surpasses all praise and admiration. He gives them, as I said, his own glory. They receive authority over the evil spirits. They reduce to nothing the pride of the devil that was so highly exalted and arrogant. They render ineffectual the demon's wickedness. By the might and efficacy of the Holy Spirit, burning them as if they were on fire, they make the devil come forth with groans and weeping from those whom he had possessed...

"He glorified his disciples, therefore, by giving them authority and power over the evil spirits and over sicknesses. Did he honour them without reason and make them famous without any logical cause? How can this be true? It was necessary, most necessary, that they should be able to work miracles, having been publicly appointed ministers of sacred proclamations. By means of their works, they then could convince men that they were the ministers of God and mediators of all beneath the heaven. The apostles then could invite them all to reconciliation and justification by faith and point out the way of salvation and of life that is this justification." (excerpt from *COMMENTARY ON LUKE, HOMILY 47*)

OPENING PRAYER: - Lord Jesus, make me a channel of your healing power and merciful love that others may find abundant life and freedom in you. Free me from all other attachments that I may joyfully pursue the treasure of your heavenly kingdom. May I witness the joy of the Gospel both in word and deed.
Amen.

CLOSING PRAYER: - Lord Jesus, may everything I do begin with You, continue with Your help, and be done under Your guidance.
May my sharing in the Mass free me from my sins, and make me worthy of Your healing.
May I grow in Your Love and Your service, and become a pleasing offering to You and with You to Your Father.
May the mystery I celebrate help me to reach eternal life with you. **Amen.**