

**FOR THE WEEKEND OF FEBRUARY 6 - 7, 2021**

Super Bowl Weekend

**Gospel reading**

Mark 5:1-20

They came to the other side of the sea, to the territory of the Gerasenes. When he got out of the boat, at once a man from the tombs who had an unclean spirit met him. The man had been dwelling among the tombs, and no one could restrain him any longer, even with a chain. In fact, he had frequently been bound with shackles and chains, but the chains had been pulled apart by him and the shackles smashed, and no one was strong enough to subdue him.

Night and day among the tombs and on the hillsides he was always crying out and bruising himself with stones. Catching sight of Jesus from a distance, he ran up and prostrated himself before him, crying out in a loud voice, “What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I adjure you by God, do not torment me!” (He had been saying to him, “Unclean spirit, come out of the man!”)

He asked him, “What is your name?” He replied, “Legion is my name. There are many of us.” And he pleaded earnestly with him not to drive them away from that territory.

Now a large herd of swine\* was feeding there on the hillside. And they pleaded with him, “Send us into the swine. Let us enter them.” And he let them, and the unclean spirits came out and entered the swine. The herd of about two thousand rushed down a steep bank into the sea, where they were drowned.

The swineherds ran away and reported the incident in the town and throughout the countryside. And people came out to see what had happened. As they approached Jesus, they caught sight of the man who had been possessed by Legion, sitting there clothed and in his right mind. And they were seized with fear. Those who witnessed the incident explained to them what had happened to the possessed man and to the swine. Then they began to beg him to leave their district.

As he was getting into the boat, the man who had been possessed pleaded to remain with him. But he would not permit him but told him instead, “Go home to your family and announce to them all that the Lord in his pity has done for you.”

Then the man went off and began to proclaim in the Decapolis what Jesus had done for him; and all were amazed.

**Homily helper / connection to stewardship / giving / charity / almsgiving**

* Super Bowl Sunday
* Money -- <https://www.thestreet.com/lifestyle/sports/super-bowl-revenue>
* Gratefulness for all of God’s gifts to us.

**Intercession**

For the lonely on this Super Bowl Sunday, that they are comforted by the ministries who serve them through the Annual Diocesan Appeal.

**Copy for bulletin announcement**

It’s Super Bowl Sunday! The amount of money that this day takes in and gives out is unbelievable. Players on the winning team receive an additional $118,000 and losing players receive $59,000...for the game. Retailers make $14.8 billion, however, some will pay as much as $5.25 million for a 30-second ad. Fans are paying $4,000 - $6,000 per ticket to attend. And this does not count the gambling and other ancillary activities that surround the game.

So what? A day like today should help to remind us where we get all the money to spend on this one, fun day. When we plan ahead to have people over, run to the store for more chips and dip, and decorate the table to look like a football field, let’s remember that without God and all He gives us and all the blessings we have, we need to thank him. A lot. So remember, when the game is on the line and you need this touchdown or last-second field-goal, and you’re praying to God that they make it, thank him for ALL your blessings too.

And thank you for your participation in the Annual Diocesan Appeal. It’s the Super Bowl of the Bishop’s mission to serve his flock.

**Copy for pulpit announcement**

Today is the NFL Super Bowl. Enjoy the game and the time with family and friends. Be sure to complete your pledge card for the Bishop’s Super Bowl, the Annual Diocesan Appeal. Be sure to do your part in helping reach the goal this year.

**Social media post/content**

Photo: Superbowl Sunday

Copy: “It’s been a difficult year. Enjoy you day of rest, and know that we appreciate you.”