

**FOR THE WEEKEND OF JANUARY 30 - 31, 2021**

Teaching with Authority/Unclean Spirits

**Gospel reading**

Mark 1:21-28

Then they came to Capernaum, and on the sabbath he entered the synagogue and taught. The people were astonished at his teaching, for he taught them as one having authority and not as the scribes.

In their synagogue was a man with an unclean spirit; he cried out, “What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are—the Holy One of God!” Jesus rebuked him and said, “Quiet! Come out of him!” The unclean spirit convulsed him and with a loud cry came out of him.

All were amazed and asked one another, “What is this? A new teaching with authority. He commands even the unclean spirits and they obey him.”

His fame spread everywhere throughout the whole region of Galilee.

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

* Jesus teaches differently than the Scribes. He doesn’t quote others or others authority, he speaks from the heart.
* Even the evil spirits recognize and obey him.
* What about us?
	+ Do we recognize Jesus as our authority?
	+ If so, then we are free.
		- In this freedom, we know he will take care of us, so we share our gifts with our parish, our diocese, and with others.
	+ If not, do we then need to ask Jesus to free us from the evil spirits, the things that keep us from him?

**Intercession**

For the gift to recognize Jesus’ authority over our lives, that we may allow that authority to guide us in our support for the Annual Diocesan Appeal.

**Copy for bulletin announcement**

Have you ever met someone, had a teacher or coach, listened to a speaker or been to a concert and been blown away by the person in charge or leading the event? You walk away thinking “Wow! That was excellent!” What was it about that person? It’s not so much what they said, but *HOW*  they said it. Well, that’s what it was like when Jesus spoke in the synagogue. He blew people away...even the evil spirits! We should be blown away too. Maybe we need to listen more closely. He speaks to us every day. He’ll drive out what needs to driven out of you as well. Let’s begin today to listen more intently, and ask for his help to cleanse us from the things that keep us from him. Ask him to be the authority in your life and for his guidance in your participation in the Annual Diocesan Appeal.

**Copy for pulpit announcement**

As you consider how Jesus is the authority in your life, we ask for you to also consider prayerfully how you will support the Annual Diocesan Appeal this year.

**Copy for email to parish (send evening of January 31st)**

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

In today’s reading, we are reminded that Jesus is the authority in all of our lives. He speaks through his heart, teaching us His way. When we recognize Jesus as the ultimate authority, we are free. In this freedom, we know He will take care of us.

I prayerfully ask you to consider the way Jesus takes care of each of us and reflect on how we can share our own gifts with others by supporting our parish and the Annual Diocesan Appeal.

<insert closing and pastor’s name>

**Social media post/content**

Photo: Prayer hands | “How is His authority speaking to you today?”

Copy: “When we recognize Jesus as the ultimate authority, we are free. In this freedom, we know He will take care of us.”