

LIVING FAITH

FIFTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

FEBRUARY 7, 2021



THE GOSPEL FOR TODAY

Mark 1:29-39

As soon as they left the synagogue, they entered the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. Now Simon's mother-in-law was in bed with a fever, and they told him about her at once. He came and took her by the hand and lifted her up. Then the fever left her, and she began to serve them.

That evening, at sunset, they brought to him all who were sick or possessed with demons. And the whole city was gathered around the door. And he cured many who were sick with various diseases, and cast out many demons; and he would not permit the demons to speak, because they knew him.

In the morning, while it was still very dark, he got up and went out to a deserted place, and there he prayed. And Simon and his companions hunted for him. When they found him, they said to him, 'Everyone is searching for you.' He answered, 'Let us go on to the neighbouring towns, so that I may proclaim the message there also; for that is what I came out to do.' And he went throughout Galilee, proclaiming the message in their synagogues and casting out demons.

REFLECTING ON THE WORD OF GOD

This Gospel passage is fascinating because it gives us some fascinating insights into the heart of Jesus. First, we are given an insight into the relationship of friendship between Jesus and his disciples. It is clear that Jesus knew his disciples well, and cared for them and their families. Simon, James and John seem to be very comfortable filling Jesus in on the state of health of Simon's mother-in-law, and inviting him in to be with her.

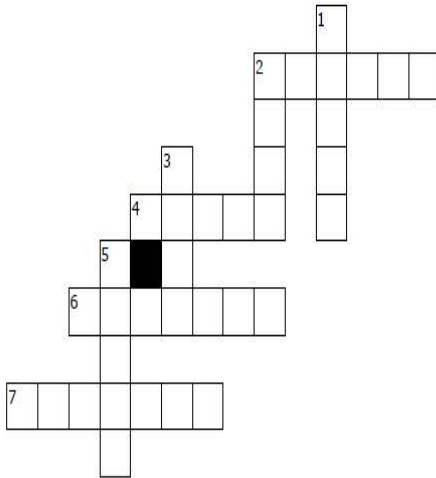
Next, the evangelist Mark gives us a glimpse into the compassion of Jesus. Seeing the sick woman, he seems not to hesitate, but goes straight to her, takes her by the hand and lifted her up. We can be certain that the lift is not only physical, but also spiritual and psychological! Then, Jesus heals the woman. Her fever having left her, she gets up and immediately she begins to serve her company!

There seems to be a link between healing and service here. Those of us who have been healed are healed not for our own sake, but for the sake of others. Jesus always calls us outward, to loving and compassionate service of others.

TALKING WITH FAMILY AND FRIENDS

- When Jesus heals, the healing is not always physical; it can be the healing of a bad attitude, or of a negative way of thinking. Minds, bodies and spirits can need healing. In any case, when we are offered this new lease on life, we are called outward in compassionate service of our neighbour.
- How have you been healed?
- How have you reached out to others in compassion?
- Have you ever been part of the healing of another person? How?

Crossword Puzzle



ACROSS

- 2. To deliver a sermon
- 4. The opposite of late
- 6. Searching for something
- 7. The time from sunrise until noon

DOWN

- 1. The son of God
- 2. To talk to God
- 3. To be without light
- 5. Located something or someone

LOOKING	PREACH	FOUND	MORNING
DARK	EARLY	JESUS	PRAY



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Children's Worship Bulletin

Looking for Jesus

Mark 1:35-39

Word Search

O P L F L E W Q N E A R B Y I
 I C R C A G S K Q V A Q R X M
 H D T E M V J E S U S B O O Y
 N G H R A G A L I L E E L R E
 C V B F R C S W I H Y F A C O
 D C I T O D H B N C O T A S C
 A T H L Y U T Z U U I L K Y S
 R F M Y L F N H N L P O D Y G
 A P Q O E A C D O B O E D Y M
 H P C L R O G S J L S W M J K
 O Y R N K N F E A H E M L R T
 R Z T A M V I X S O A F A S F
 O B A D Y Q Q N I U R D M Z P
 R A X I Y E W Q G S L Q Z H X
 K Y R C B V D X F E Y R H S N

PREACH	NEARBY	MORNING	LOOK	GALILEE
HOUSE	EARLY	DARK	PRAYED	PLACE
VILLAGES	JESUS	SOLITARY	LEFT	FOUND

Archdiocese of St. John's



THE CHURCH TEACHES

THE SEASON OF LENT BEGINS ON WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 17



ASH WEDNESDAY IN THE TIME OF COVID

In many places in the world, the COVID-19 pandemic has made large gatherings, including church services and Masses, impossible. Here in the Archdiocese of St John's and in the province of Newfoundland and Labrador, we are blessed, through excellent public health guidance and concern for the common good, to be able to continue to have gatherings of up to 100 people for Mass.

Because of caution around the spread of COVID-19, changes have been approved by Pope Francis with regard to how ashes will be distributed on Ash Wednesday. They are as follows: After blessing the ashes and sprinkling them with holy water in silence, the priest will address those present, reciting **once** the formula found in the Roman Missal: "Repent, and believe in the Gospel" or "Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return". Then, the priest will cleanse his hands, put on a face mask, and sprinkle the ashes on each person's head without saying anything further.

WHAT IS LENT?

Lent is a special time--a season-- of prayer, penance, sacrifice and almsgiving in preparation of the celebration of Easter. In the desire to renew the liturgical practices of the Church, The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy of Vatican Council II stated, "The two elements which are especially characteristic of Lent — the recalling of baptism or the preparation for it, and penance — should be given greater emphasis in the liturgy and in liturgical catechesis. It is by means of them that the Church prepares the faithful for the celebration of Easter, while they hear God's word more frequently and devote more time to prayer" (no. 109).



The word Lent itself is derived from the Anglo-Saxon words *lencten*, meaning "Spring," and *lenctentid*, or "Springtide."



40 DAYS OF LENT

By the end of the fourth century, the 40-day period of Easter preparation known as Lent existed, and that prayer and fasting constituted its primary spiritual exercises.

Of course, the number "40" has always had special spiritual significance regarding preparation. On Mount Sinai, preparing to receive the Ten Commandments, "Moses stayed there with the Lord for 40 days and 40 nights, without eating any food or drinking any water" (Ex 34:28). Elijah walked "40 days and 40 nights" to the mountain of the Lord, Mount Horeb (another name for Sinai) (1 Kgs 19:8). Most importantly, Jesus fasted and prayed for "40 days and 40 nights" in the desert before He began His public ministry (Mt 4:2).



DID YOU KNOW?

On February 2, Pope Francis added four new liturgical Memorials into the Roman Calendar: Martha, Mary, and Lazarus will be celebrated together, while Gregory of Narek, John of Avila, and Hildegard of Bingen will have their own optional memorials.

POPE FRANCIS PROCLAIMS THE YEAR OF ST. JOSEPH DECEMBER 8, 2020-DECEMBER 8, 2021

In a new Apostolic Letter entitled *Patris corde* ("With a Father's Heart"), Pope Francis describes Saint Joseph as a beloved father, a tender and loving father, an obedient father, an accepting father; a father who is creatively courageous, a working father, and a father in the shadows. This week, we share the fifth aspect, shining a light on Joseph as a creatively courageous father. Here's what Pope Francis has to say...

If the first stage of all true interior healing is to accept our personal history and embrace even the things in life that we did not choose, we must now add another important element: creative courage. This emerges especially in the way we deal with difficulties. In the face of difficulty, we can either give up and walk away, or somehow engage with it. At times, difficulties bring out resources we did not even think we had.

As we read the infancy narratives, we may often wonder why God did not act in a more direct and clear way. Yet God acts through events and people. Joseph was the man chosen by God to guide the beginnings of the history of redemption. He was the true "miracle" by which God saves the child and his mother. God acted by trusting in Joseph's creative courage. Arriving in Bethlehem and finding no lodging where Mary could give birth, Joseph took a stable and, as best he could, turned it into a welcoming home for the Son of God come into the world (cf. *Lk 2:6-7*). Faced with imminent danger from Herod, who wanted to kill the child, Joseph was warned once again in a dream to protect the child, and rose in the middle of the night to prepare the flight into Egypt (cf. *Mt 2:13-14*).

A superficial reading of these stories can often give the impression that the world is at the mercy of the strong and mighty, but the "good news" of the Gospel consists in showing that, for all the arrogance and violence of worldly powers, God always finds a way to carry out his saving plan. So too, our lives may at times seem to be at the mercy of the powerful, but the Gospel shows us what counts. God always finds a way to save us, provided we show the same creative courage as the carpenter of Nazareth, who was able to turn a problem into a possibility by trusting always in divine providence.

If at times God seems not to help us, surely this does not mean that we have been abandoned, but instead are being trusted to plan, to be creative, and to find solutions ourselves.

That kind of creative courage was shown by the friends of the paralytic, who lowered him from the roof in order to bring him to Jesus (cf. *Lk 5:17-26*). Difficulties did not stand in the way of those friends' boldness and persistence. They were convinced that Jesus could heal the man, and "finding no way to bring him in because of the crowd, they went up on the roof and let him down with his bed through the tiles into the middle of the crowd in front of Jesus. When he saw their faith, he said, 'Friend, your sins are forgiven you'" (vv. 19-20). Jesus recognized the creative faith with which they sought to bring their sick friend to him. (Part Five will be continued next week in *Living Faith*)



The window depicting St Joseph with the child Jesus, found in the clerestory level in the Basilica-Cathedral of St John the Baptist, St John's.

This window was crafted in Beauvais, France by Louis Lichtenfeld-Koch in 1891.