

# FAITH AND REASON

**Pope at Angelus: 'Let yourselves feel the full force of God's word'.** Pope Francis on Sunday encouraged believers to read the Gospel with an open heart, to listen to Him and follow Him, to experience the signs of His salvation in their lives. Addressing the faithful on the fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time from the Library of the Apostolic Palace, the Pope reflected on the reading from the Gospel of Mark (Mk 1: 21-28), that he explained, tells of a typical day in Jesus' ministry: The Sabbath, a day dedicated to repose and prayer. He described the reaction of those present in the synagogue of Capernaum where Jesus was reading and commenting on the Scriptures. They were attracted by His manner of speaking, the Pope said, and they were astonished because Jesus demonstrates an authority different to that of the scribes. Furthermore, he said, "Jesus shows Himself to be powerful also in His works. Indeed, a man of the synagogue turns to Him, addressing Him as God's envoy: He recognizes the evil spirit, orders him to leave that man, and so drives him out." The Pope said the reading highlights two characteristic elements of Jesus' work: "preaching, and the thaumaturgical work of the healer."

## **Jesus preaches with the authority of God.**

He added that preaching is emphasized the most, while "exorcism" is presented as a confirmation of the singular "authority" of Jesus and His teaching. Jesus, he explained, preaches with His own authority, "as one who possesses a doctrine derived from himself, and not like the scribes who repeated previous traditions and laws," it has the same authority as God who speaks, "for with a single command He easily frees the possessed man from the evil one, and heals him." "His word brings into effect what He says, because He is the ultimate prophet; indeed, He is the very Word of God incarnate. That is why He speaks with divine authority," he said.

## **He defeats the evil present in the world:**

The second aspect, healing, Pope Francis continued, shows that Christ's preaching is intended to defeat the evil present in humankind and the world. "His word points directly at the kingdom of Satan: it puts him in crisis and makes him recoil, obliging him to leave the world," he said, noting that the possessed man in the synagogue, "reached by the Lord's command, is freed and transformed into a new person." Jesus' preaching, the Pope continued, "conforms to a logic contrary to that of the world and of the evil one: His words appear to be the upheaval of a mistaken order of things." In fact, the demon who has possessed the man cries out as Jesus approaches: "What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us?" These words, Pope Francis explained, indicated the total extraneousness between Jesus and Satan: "they are on completely different planes; there is nothing in common between them; they are the opposite of each other."

## **Carry the Gospel with you every day:**

The Pope said that this Sunday's Gospel should inspire in us too some of the admiration and wonder that the people of Capernaum felt as they listened to Jesus, that Sabbath day, in the synagogue.

And he invited believers to always carry a copy of the Gospel with them and to delve into it with an open heart, allowing themselves to be touched and healed by God's Word and promise of salvation. "May the Virgin Mary, who always kept Jesus' words and gestures in her heart, and followed Him with total willingness and faithfulness," he concluded, "help us to listen to Him and follow Him, to experience the signs of His salvation in our life." **By Vatican News staff writer**

**Time:** We shall not waste our time in looking for extraordinary experiences in our life, but I live by pure faith, ever watchful and ready for his coming by doing our day-to-day duties with extraordinary love and devotion... **St. Teresa of Calcutta**

**The Role of Woman in the Economy of Salvation:** Looking at the mystery of the Blessed Virgin's Assumption, we can understand the plan of Divine Providence for humanity: after Christ, the incarnate Word, Mary is the first human being to achieve the eschatological ideal, anticipating the fullness of happiness promised to the elect through the resurrection of the body. In the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin, we can see the divine will to advance woman. In a way analogous to what happened at the beginning of the human race and of salvation history, in God's plan the eschatological ideal was not to be revealed in an individual, but in a couple. Thus in heavenly glory, beside the risen Christ there is a woman who has been raised up, Mary: the new Adam and the new Eve, the first fruits of the general resurrection of the bodies of all humanity. Despite their brevity, these notes enable us to show clearly that Mary's Assumption reveals the nobility and dignity of the human body. In the face of the profanation and debasement to which modern society frequently subjects the female body, the mystery of the Assumption proclaims the supernatural destiny and dignity of every human body called by the Lord to become an instrument of holiness and to share in his glory ... **St. John Paul II, at the Vatican, July 9, 1997**

**Spirit of Denial:** Pain and suffering are from sin and selfishness, but sacrifice is not; it is from love. It is through want of love that pain arises. Suffering brings one to the door of the Temple; but love is the key that unlocks the door, and by transmuting pain into sacrifice prepares for the happiness of the everlasting dwellings. Those who have... never felt hunger involuntarily through fasting, can little understand the legitimate demands of the poor, or the obligation to feed them in charity. In like manner, those who never have experienced suffering, which can be a condition of love, cannot understand how Christian souls resign themselves to, someone who first loved us ... **Bishop Fulton Sheen**

**Charity: the queen of the virtues:** Nothing is more important than the God-given gift of charity. This alone is what separates those who will be saved from those who will be lost. Other good gifts are given through the Spirit but what use are they without charity? A man may not have the gift of tongues of prophecy, nor have great knowledge, nor have given away all his property to the poor perhaps he has nothing to give or because of family obligations, but charity will still bring him to heaven" ... **St Augustine of Hippo**

#### **A Thought For the Day**

<b>Sunday</b>	Man becomes really human when he is touched by God.
<b>Monday</b>	A humble soul does not trust itself, but places all its confidence in God.
<b>Tuesday</b>	To be tempted is a sign that the soul is very pleasing to the Lord.
<b>Wednesday</b>	Bless those who curse you, and pray for your enemies, and fast for those who persecute you.
<b>Thursday</b>	One should never initiate anything that he cannot saturate with prayer.
<b>Friday</b>	Love only grows by sharing. You can only have more for yourself by giving it away to others.
<b>Saturday</b>	A day wasted on others is not wasted on oneself.

**An Ecology Worthy of Man:** The proposed model of health requires that the Church and society create ecology worthy of man. The environment, in fact, is connected with the health of the individual and of the population: it constitutes the human being's "home" and the complex resources entrusted to his care and stewardship, the garden to be tended and the field to be cultivated. But the external ecology of the person must be combined with an interior, moral ecology, the only one that is fitting for a proper concept of health. Considered in its entirety, human health thus becomes an attribute of life; a resource for the service of one's neighbor and openness to salvation ... **St John Paul the Great.**

**Following, Believing, and Loving:** To follow means to entrust oneself to the Word of God, to rate it higher than the laws of money and bread and to live by it. In short, to follow means to believe, but to "believe" in the sense of making a radical decision between the two and, in the last analysis, the only two possibilities for human life: bread and the word. The human person does not live on bread alone but also and primarily on the word, the spirit, meaning. It is always this same radical decision that confronts disciples when they hear the call "follow me"; the radical decision to stake one's life either on profit and gain or on truth and love; the radical decision to live for oneself or to surrender oneself... Only in losing themselves can human beings find themselves. The real and radical martyrdom of genuine self-renunciation is and remains the basic condition for following Christ. To follow Christ means to accept the inner essence of the cross, namely, the radical love expressed therein, and thus to imitate God himself.

For on the Cross God revealed himself as the One who pours himself out in prodigal fashion; who surrenders his glory in order to be present for us; who desires to rule the world not by power but by love, and in the weakness of the Cross reveals his power which operates so differently from the power of this world's mighty rulers. To follow Christ, then, means to enter into the self-surrender that is this real heart of love. To follow Christ means to become one who loves as God has loved. In the last analysis, to follow Christ is simply for man to become human by integration into the humanity of God... **Pope Benedict XVI**

**In His Will is Our Peace**  
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