

Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time
† Sunday, 31 January 2021



In England and Wales

Cycle of Prayer – For Openness to the word of God/ For Education/Racial Justice

Keynote: Jesus calls us to speak with authority in his name

Book of Deuteronomy 18:15-20

Moses tells the assembled people: *'Your God will raise up for you a prophet like myself, from among yourselves... to him you must listen'* For the Lord God had said to Moses: *'I will put my words into his mouth and he shall tell them all I commanded. The man who does not listen to my words that he speaks in my name shall be answerable to me for it.'* God is laying down the message firmly here, and also gives a warning to the prophet who speaks falsely: *'But a prophet who presumes to say in my name a thing I have not commanded him to say... that prophet shall die.'*

We need to be 'all ears'!

Responsorial Psalm 94 (95) – A communal processional hymn of praise

First Letter of Paul to the Corinthians 7:32-35

Continuing his good advice to his converts and the new church assembly at Corinth, the apostle Paul expects the Christian to *'give undivided attention to the Lord.'* Making references to the unmarried, the married, men and women, and their various worldly occupations, Paul urges all to make it their first preoccupation to worry about pleasing the Lord, *'so that everything is as it should be, and that you give your undivided attention to the Lord.'*

It may seem to be a bit unworldly, but that is just the point that the apostle is making!

Gospel according to Mark 1:21-28

'As soon as the Sabbath came Jesus went to the synagogue and began to teach. And his teaching made a deep impression on them because, unlike the scribes, he taught them with authority.' This fact, together with the unsettling event of the 'man with the unclean spirit' created a buzz among those present, and *'the people were so astonished that they started asking each other what it all meant. "Here is a teaching that is new," they said, "and with authority behind it."*

Our evangelist Mark wants us to understand that Jesus is speaking with authority, and almost invites us to ask each other what it all means. He wants his readers to see *'(Jesus') reputation rapidly spread everywhere, through the surrounding... countryside.'* Mark would have us do likewise, and share the gospel good news!

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NOTE – Tuesday, 2 February is the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord – Candlemas. The Liturgy starts with a procession and blessing of candles.