



# WEEKLY GOSPEL REFLECTION



## 5<sup>TH</sup> SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME, CYCLE B

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*"Jesus cured many who were sick with various diseases, and he drove out many demons" Mark 1:36*

Jesus came not just for those he encountered while he walked this earth, but for the salvation of the whole world through the mystical body of Christ within the Apostolic Church given to us at his death, resurrection and ascension into heaven. As his earthly ministry touched the lives of many people, so does his Gospel go out to all the ends of the earth. As we, his Church, spread the Good News the healing power of grace brings joy to those in despair as we are Christ's witnesses of hope of the lived reality of the Kingdom of God *"on earth as it is in heaven."* (see Matthew 6:10)

Western Civilization believes it is an enlightened culture. It declares that it has entered the Age of Enlightenment in today's era where secular intellectuals emphasize reason over superstition and science over blind faith. This leads to a deep skepticism of the gospels for those that have not had a mystical encounter with Jesus Christ.

This week's Gospel tells of Jesus healing Peter's mother, then *"He cured many who were sick with various diseases"* (see Mark 1:36), preaching the Good News in the nearby villages and towns and throughout the whole of Galilee. All these encounters, to the "enlightened" reader, can be dismissed through "reason and science." But then, we get to that which is hard to explain with science, *"he drove out many demons."*

The concept of "demons" in today's culture remains largely a mysterious topic, even with those that claim to be "enlightened." How often we hear of "demons" that affect people's lives. It comes down to the simple question that lies before us, do we believe in demons and evil in this world, or can it be explained away scientifically. As most people in our culture mature in age and wisdom, it becomes clear that evil is indeed a very real presence. Science cannot explain it away. It is one of the most compelling arguments Christians have for the lived reality of the mercy of Jesus Christ and his Church. The light of grace and life shatter the darkness of death, evil, and Satan. It is through our daily prayers that Christ binds the Evil One and his cohort of death and destruction in the farthest corner of hell.

Let us reflect this week on the sacred words of Isaiah 61:1-3

*The spirit of the Lord God is upon me,  
because the Lord has anointed me;  
he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed,  
to bind up the broken-hearted,  
to proclaim liberty to the captives,  
and release to the prisoners;  
to comfort all who mourn;  
to provide for those who suffer in Zion—  
to give them the oil of gladness instead of mourning,  
the mantle of praise instead of faintheartedness.*

**A Reading from the Holy Gospel according to Mark**

On leaving the synagogue

Jesus entered the house of Simon and Andrew with James and John.

Simon's mother-in-law lay sick with a fever.

They immediately told him about her.

He approached, grasped her hand, and helped her up.

Then the fever left her and she waited on them.

When it was evening, after sunset,

they brought to him all who were ill or possessed by demons.

The whole town was gathered at the door.

He cured many who were sick with various diseases,

and he drove out many demons,

not permitting them to speak because they knew him.

Rising very early before dawn, he left

and went off to a deserted place, where he prayed.

Simon and those who were with him pursued him

and on finding him said, "Everyone is looking for you."

He told them, "Let us go on to the nearby villages

that I may preach there also.

For this purpose have I come."

So he went into their synagogues,

preaching and driving out demons throughout the whole of Galilee.

***The Gospel of the Lord***