

† HOME SERVICE OF WORD AND PRAYER †
Fourth Sunday after Epiphany
January 31, 2021

PRELUDE

St. Agnes

Kevin Sadowski

INVOCATION and CONFESSION

P In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

P If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

C But if we confess our sins, God, who is faithful and just, will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

P Let us then confess our sins to God our Father.

C Most merciful God, we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean. We have sinned against You in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved You with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We justly deserve Your present and eternal punishment. For the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in Your will and walk in Your ways, to the glory of Your holy name. Amen.

P Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for us, and for His sake forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

OPENING HYMN

O Jesus, King Most Wonderful

O Jesus, King most wonderful! O Conqueror renowned!

O Source of peace ineffable, in whom all joys are found:

When once you visit darkened hearts, then truth begins to shine,
then earthly vanity departs, then kindles love divine.

May ev'ry heart confess Your name, forever You adore,
and seeking You, itself inflame to seek You more and more!

Oh, may our tongues forever bless, may we love You alone
and ever in our lives express the image of Your own!

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P The Lord be with you.

C And also with you.

P Let us pray:

C O God, You are the strength of all who put their trust in You. Mercifully grant Your power and protection to support us in all dangers and carry us through all temptations; through Jesus Christ, Your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON

Deuteronomy 18:15-20

¹⁵The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own people; you shall heed such a prophet. ¹⁶This is what you requested of the Lord your God at Horeb on the day of the assembly when you said: "If I hear the voice of the Lord my God any more, or ever again see this great fire, I will die." ¹⁷Then the Lord replied to me: "They are right in what they have said. ¹⁸I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their own people; I will put my words in the mouth of the prophet, who shall speak to them everything that I command. ¹⁹Anyone who does not heed the words that the prophet shall speak in my name, I myself will hold accountable. ²⁰But any prophet who speaks in the name of other gods, or who presumes to speak in my name a word that I have not commanded the prophet to speak – that prophet shall die."

L This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

EPISTLE

1 Corinthians 8:1-13

¹Now concerning food sacrificed to idols: we know that "all of us possess knowledge." Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up. ²Anyone who claims to know something does not yet have the necessary knowledge; ³but anyone who loves God is known by him. ⁴Hence, as to the eating of food offered to idols, we know that "no idol in the world really exists," and that "there is no God but one." ⁵Indeed, even though there may be so-called gods in heaven or on earth – as in fact there are many gods and many lords – ⁶yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist. ⁷It is not everyone, however, who has this knowledge. Since some have become so accustomed to idols until now, they still think of the food they eat as food offered to an idol; and their conscience, being weak, is defiled. ⁸"Food will not bring us close to God." We are no worse off if we do not eat, and no better off if we do. ⁹But take care that this liberty of yours does not somehow become a stumbling block to the weak. ¹⁰For if others see you, who possess knowledge, eating in the temple of an idol, might they not, since their conscience is weak, be encouraged to the point of eating food sacrificed to idols? ¹¹So by your knowledge those weak believers for whom Christ died are destroyed. ¹²But when you thus sin against

members of your family, and wound their conscience when it is weak, you sin against Christ. ¹³Therefore, if food is a cause of their falling, I will never eat meat, so that I may not cause one of them to fall.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

ALLELUIA VERSE

P Alleluia. Lord, to whom shall we go?

C You have the words of eternal life. Alleluia. (John 6:68)

GOSPEL

Mark 1:21-28

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Mark, the 1st chapter.

C Glory to You, O Lord.

²¹[Jesus and his disciples] went to Capernaum; and when the sabbath came, he entered the synagogue and taught. ²²They were astounded at his teaching, for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes. ²³Just then there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit, ²⁴and 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." ²⁵But Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be silent, and come out of him!" ²⁶And the unclean spirit, convulsing him and crying with a loud voice, came out of him. ²⁷They were all amazed, and they kept on asking one another, "What is this? A new teaching – with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him." ²⁸At once his fame began to spread throughout the surrounding region of Galilee.

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to You, O Christ.

HYMN OF THE DAY

Thy Strong Word

Thy strong word did cleave the darkness; at Thy speaking it was done.

For created light we thank Thee, while Thine ordered seasons run.

Alleluia, alleluia! Praise to Thee who light dost send!

Alleluia, alleluia! Alleluia without end!

Lo, on those who dwelt in darkness, dark as night and deep as death,
broke the light of Thy salvation, breathed Thine own life-giving breath.

Alleluia, alleluia! Praise to Thee who light dost send!

Alleluia, alleluia! Alleluia without end!

From the cross Thy wisdom shining breaketh forth in conqu'ring might;
from the cross forever beameth all Thy bright redeeming light.

Alleluia, alleluia! Praise to Thee who light dost send!

Alleluia, alleluia! Alleluia without end!

SERMON

"Reflections on the Reading: Mark 1:21-28" (insert)
Rev. Dr. Robert Hartwell

THE APOSTLES' CREED

C I believe in God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth.

**And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.
He descended into hell.**

The third day He rose again from the dead.

**He ascended into heaven,
and sits at the right hand of God the Father almighty.
From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

P Let us pray for the whole Church of God in Christ Jesus and for all people according to their needs.

P You are God of gods and Lord of lords. Reveal the saving knowledge of Christ's truth to all people, that loving You and one another we may be one in spirit. Lord, in Your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

P O Lord, Your voice was heard at Mt. Sinai and Your authority was made manifest in Christ, the Prophet greater than Moses. Send faithful preachers into Your harvest who will be diligent to listen to Your Word and speak it faithfully in Your name, and give us ears to hear gladly the saving words of Christ. Lord, in Your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

P Heavenly Father, guard our families and homes, and build them up in love. Support parents in their task of bringing up their children, strengthen those whose faith is weak, and make us bold witnesses to our faith with heart and action. Lord, in Your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

P Almighty God, give health and success to all who serve for our governance and protection. Make them high in purpose, wise in counsel and unwavering in duty. Lord, in Your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

P Father of all mercies, Your Son cast out unclean spirits and taught with authority. He is the Great Physician of body and soul. Heal and restore those who are sick, distressed, in danger, or facing any need. We pray especially for those on our prayer line and those we remember before You now, either silently or aloud...(PAUSE). Sustain them with patience, trusting in Your gracious care. Lord, in Your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

P Lord of life, look with favor upon all who are grieving and grant the peace that only You can give. We give you thanks for the lives that have touched our own, and for the faithful witnesses of every time and place. Lord, in Your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

P All these things and whatever else You know that we need, grant us for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior, who taught us to pray:

C Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

CLOSING HYMN

O Bless the Lord, My Soul

O bless the Lord, my soul! Let all within me join
and aid my tongue to bless His name whose favors are divine.

O bless the Lord, my soul, nor let His mercies lie
forgotten in unthankfulness and without praises die!

'Tis He forgives thy sins; 'tis He relieves thy pain;
'tis He that heals thy sicknesses and makes thee young again.

His wondrous works and ways He made by Moses known,
but sent the world His truth and grace by His beloved Son.

BENEDICTION

P The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you. The Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace.

C Amen.

P Go in peace to serve the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

Ebenezer

John Behnke

* * * * *

Special thanks to our additional participant in today's service:

Lector Anton DeRosa

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Reflections on the Reading by Rev. Dr. Robert Hartwell

January 31, 2021

Reflections on the Reading: Mark 1:21-28

²¹[Jesus and his disciples] went to Capernaum; and when the sabbath came, he entered the synagogue and taught. ²²They were astounded at his teaching, for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes. ²³Just then there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit, ²⁴and 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." ²⁵But Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be silent, and come out of him!" ²⁶And the unclean spirit, convulsing him and crying with a loud voice, came out of him. ²⁷They were all amazed, and they kept on asking one another, "What is this? A new teaching — with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him." ²⁸At once his fame began to spread throughout the surrounding region of Galilee.

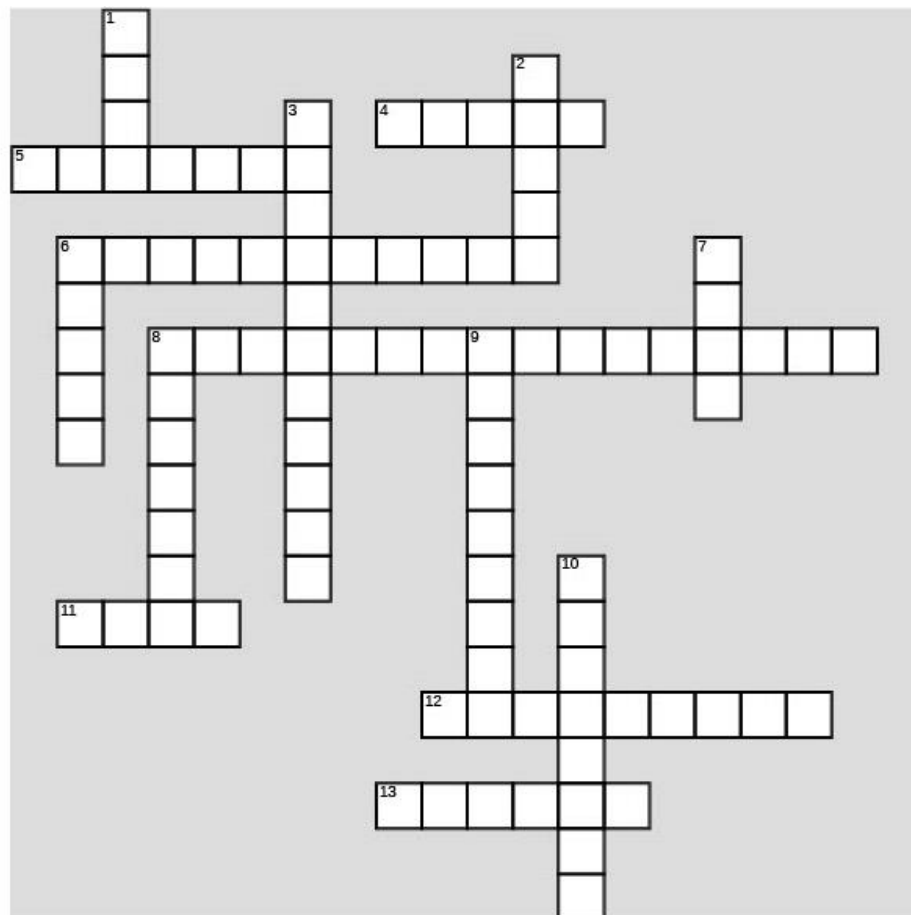
Reflections:

1. Jesus spoke with authority. This authority was noticed by humans and even respected by the spiritual forces.
2. Jesus' listeners in Capernaum would have probably thought about Moses' words in Deuteronomy. Jesus spoke with God's authority. Perhaps Jesus was THE prophet to come that Moses had predicted?
3. The authority was seen throughout Jesus' life even to His death. From the cross Jesus said with authority, "It is finished." And it was (John 19:30).
4. The Epistle reading from 1st Corinthians shows this teaching authority in the life of the apostle Paul as he preached the message of Christ. It continued through him and now through the written Word of God (the Bible).
5. Will you listen to Jesus and trust His authority?

Reflections
on
the
Reading

Personal Notes:

Reflections
Crossword
Puzzle:



Across

- 4** Jewish prophet who led the israelites out of slavery in Egypt.
- 5** Region where Jesus grew to adulthood.
- 6** Residents of Corinth in Greece.
- 8** Unseen powers that are not physical in nature.
- 11** 4th Gospel in New Testament
- 12** A meeting house for Jewish teaching and prayer.
- 13** What we need to do to understand what Jesus wants for us.

Down

- 1** Influential Apostle and Missionary who wrote the majority of books in the New Testament.
- 2** 5 letter proper name for Christian savior.
- 3** 5th book in the Old Testament.
- 6** Form of punishment and intimidation used by the Romans in Jesus' time.
- 7** Smallest Gospel in the New Testament.
- 8** Jewish day of rest.
- 9** Real or perceived power.
- 10** Jesus' hometown.

WORD LIST:

AUTHORITY	GALILEE	MARK	SABBATH
CORINTHIANS	JESUS	MOSES	SPIRITUAL_FORCES
CROSS	JOHN	NAZARETH	SYNAGOGUE
DEUTERONOMY	LISTEN	PAUL	