

SUNDAY ALIVE

5th February 2012 Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Mark gives us a picture of Jesus' activities at the start of his ministry. We can see how his sphere of action expands: after healing Peter's mother-in-law, he heals all those who come to the house, and then goes through the whole of Galilee. We can see how Jesus is unwilling to turn away any who come to him for help. He spends time in prayer, but this leads him to more action, and an eagerness to reach more people, both to preach and to heal.

In all his works Jesus reveals the coming of the kingdom of God. His miracles, healing sickness and casting out demons, reveal God's power and show that evil is defeated. Jesus performs these miracles not only to help the individuals concerned, but to show that he is victorious over the devil. His exorcism[^] anticipate the victory over the ruler of this world achieved by his death and resurrection. 'Now is the judgement of this world, now shall the ruler of this world be cast out; and I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself (John 12:31-32).

This victory of Jesus over evil is one in which we can share today. We all face a spiritual battle in our daily lives, and it is important for us to remain aware of this, and to turn to the Holy Spirit for guidance and strength. Many forms of evil in the world are obvious: wars, genocide, oppression and torture. But we are also assailed by more subtle evils: temptations to idolatry, superstitions, the false philosophies of this world. In our secular society there are many voices drawing us away from God, some obviously but some in a more insidious way that can delude us. This is why we need to spend time in prayer every day, and fill our minds with the truths of the gospel. We hold fast to an invincible hope, that Satan is already conquered by Christ and now has only limited power. We can experience Christ's victory over evil every day if we turn to him, and we can rejoice that at the end of time the devil and his helpers will be vanquished once and for all.

'Lord Jesus, deliver us from all evil, and grant us the wisdom to cling to the truth of the gospel, so that we may share in your victory over Satan and all his works!'

Job 7:1-7

Psalm 146(147):1-6 1 Corinthians 9:16-19, 22-23

Mark 1:29-39

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