



**First Reading:** (Deut 18:15-20) Moses said to the people, "The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your brethren -- him you shall heed -- just as you desired of the Lord your God at Horeb on the day of the assembly, when you said, 'Let me not hear again the voice of the Lord my God, or see this great fire any more, lest I die.' And the Lord said to me, "They have rightly said all that they have spoken. I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brethren; and I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him. And whoever will not give heed to my words which he shall speak in my name, I myself will require it of him. But the prophet who presumes to speak a word in my name which I have not commanded him to speak, or who speaks in the name of other gods, that same prophet shall die."

**Ps 94:1-2, 6-9**

**R./ O that today you would listen to the his voice! Harden not your hearts.**

**Second Reading:** (1 Cor 7:32-35) I want you to be free from anxieties. The unmarried man is anxious about the affairs of the Lord, how to please the Lord; but the married man is anxious about worldly affairs, how to please his wife, and his interests are divided. And the unmarried woman or girl is anxious about the affairs of the Lord, how to be holy in body and spirit; but the married woman is anxious about worldly affairs, how to please her husband. I say this for your own benefit, not to lay any restraint upon you, but to promote good order and to secure your undivided devotion to the Lord.

**Gospel:** (Mk 1:21-28) They went into Capernaum; and immediately on the sabbath he entered the synagogue and taught. And they were astonished at his teaching, for he taught them as one who had authority, and not as the scribes. And immediately there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit; and 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." But Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be

silent, and come out of him!" And the unclean spirit, convulsing him and crying with a loud voice, came out of him. And they were all amazed, so that they questioned among themselves, saying, "What is this? A new

teaching! With authority he commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him." And at once his fame spread everywhere throughout all the surrounding region of Galilee.



### REFLECTION

Jesus is teaching in a synagogue at Capernaum. Mark does not tell us what Jesus taught but rather how he taught, that Jesus taught with authority. That is followed by an exorcism, the first miracle story recorded by Mark, which is a manifestation of Jesus' authority over unclean spirits. The teaching and the exorcism are connected, since both result in amazement and acclamations about Jesus' authority. Jesus was not simply teaching the Scriptures with an external authority that comes from holding an office, but through a personal authority as the one uniquely authorized, commissioned, or empowered to declare and institute the reign of God. **Being anointed for the task and personal integrity in responding to it are the hallmarks of such personal authority.** There is another important aspect that needs our attention. Mark's Gospel has a theme that runs throughout, called the "Messianic Secret." The readers know the messianic identity of Jesus from the beginning, they know what is going on, even the evil spirit knows; but the disciples do not. They have moments of partial understanding, but they really just don't get the whole picture. They just keep on missing the point throughout the whole Gospel. **Discipleship is a progressive way, slowly and gradually coming to know the one whom we follow.**