

TENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME 06/9, 2024.

Readings: Gen. 3:9 -15;2Cor. 4:13 -5::1; Mk. 3: 20 - 35.

As Catholics, we believe some pretty incredible things if you really think about it. And yet, there are all sorts of things that we find extremely hard to believe. The beliefs we **struggle with the most** are the ones that **demand particular things from us**, beliefs that require us to act a certain way or possess certain attitudes or see the world in a particular way.

In today's Gospel story from Mark, we once again see the Jewish authorities taking issue with Jesus, trying to **find fault with what he was saying or doing**. In this case, they are concerned with the power being displayed by Jesus as he "drives out demons." How can he do that? Where does his power come from? We don't understand what is going on. At some level, we can understand their fear. We likely would act in a similar way if we were witnessing the same things. We should not be too hard on them.

Jesus, as he often does, uses it as a chance **to reveal some deep truth** to them. And he leads, with the essence of what he wants to tell them. He says,

"How can Satan drive out Satan?"

Was he talking to them, or is he talking to us?

Maybe the implications of Jesus' question are not obvious to you. And that is ok. Yet, what he is saying is actually something quite profound, something that, in reality, is one of our **greatest obstacles to living a good, decent, holy, faithful, God - centered life**. When Jesus asks, "How can Satan drive out Satan?" he is reminding us that:

Evil can never defeat evil.

Violence cannot stop violence.

Hatred cannot triumph over hatred.

This is the ultimate "message" of the cross. This truth is revealed to us in the victory on Calvary. **Love** is the only thing that can **defeat evil**. Love is the only thing that can triumph over hatred or violence. Evil, violence and hatred have been rendered powerless through love...not a lukewarm kind of love...but a deep, lasting, unconditional kind of love, the kind that says "I will do the loving thing in every situation. **No exceptions.**"

This is very **hard to accept and live out**, and the favorite "solution" for many of us is to **fight evil with evil**.

Today we are asked to embrace a much different attitude, one that resists the impulse to hurt those who have wronged us, or turn violence, or exact revenge on those who have angered us in some way. These things will never achieve what we hope for. **How can Satan drive out Satan?** He can't. **But love can.**

May we remember that not just today, but every time we are wronged in some way.