

## FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

Jesus' Authority and Power

January 31, 2021

In today's Gospel from Mark 1, we are reminded of Jesus' divine authority in His teaching to the people and also in His power over evil spirits. This power and authority was foretold by prophets such as Moses, pointing to the One who would fulfill all things as the long-awaited perfect prophet and Savior. In that power and authority, Christ has won our victory through His death and rising, and we are blessed with freedom in that faith to be used to His glory in service to others.

**OPENING HYMN:** [Lord Jesus Christ, Be Present Now](#)

### INVOCATION

**Pastor:** In the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**People:** **Amen.**

### CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION *Psalm 32:1-2, 5-7, 10*

**Pastor:** Blessed is the one whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered.

**People:** **Blessed is the man against whom the LORD counts no iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no deceit.**

**Pastor:** As Moses speaks to the people through God, we confess those times we do not listen to Your words and close our hearts to You.

**People:** **Forgive us, Lord.**

**Pastor:** As Paul warns, we confess those times when our freedom in Christ causes one who is weak in faith to stumble.

**People:** **Forgive us, Lord.**

**Pastor:** As Jesus, the long-awaited Prophet and Savior, taught with and showed His authority and power, we confess those times when we allow the forces of evil to make us forget the deliverance and love of God we have in Christ.

**People:** **Forgive us, Lord.**

**Pastor:** With David the psalmist, we humbly come before the Lord.

*Silence for reflection*

Pastor: I acknowledged my sin to You, and I did not cover my iniquity;

**People: I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the LORD," and You forgave the iniquity of my sin.**

Pastor: Therefore let everyone who is godly offer prayer to You at a time when You may be found; surely in the rush of great waters, they shall not reach him.

**People: You are a hiding place for me; You preserve me from trouble; You surround me with shouts of deliverance.**

Pastor: Almighty God, our heavenly Father, has had mercy upon us and given His only Son to die for us and for His sake forgives us all our sins. As a servant of Christ and by His authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit. To those who believe in His name He gives the power to become the children of God and has promised them His Holy Spirit. May the Lord, who has begun this good work in us, bring it to completion in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.

**People: Amen.**

Pastor: Many are the sorrows of the wicked,

**People: but steadfast love surrounds the one who trusts in the LORD.**

**PSALM**     *Psalms 111*

<sup>1</sup>Praise the LORD!

I will give thanks to the LORD with my whole heart,  
in the company of the upright, in the congregation

**<sup>2</sup>Great are the works of the LORD,  
studied by all who delight in them.**

<sup>3</sup>Full of splendor and majesty is his work,  
and his righteousness endures forever.

**<sup>4</sup>He has caused his wondrous works to be remembered;  
the LORD is gracious and merciful.**

<sup>5</sup>He provides food for those who fear him;  
he remembers his covenant forever.

**<sup>6</sup>He has shown his people the power of his works,  
in giving them the inheritance of the nations.**

<sup>7</sup>The works of his hands are faithful and just;  
all his precepts are trustworthy;

**<sup>8</sup>they are established forever and ever,  
to be performed with faithfulness and uprightness.**

<sup>9</sup>He sent redemption to his people;  
he has commanded his covenant forever.  
Holy and awesome is his name!

**<sup>10</sup>The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom;  
all those who practice it have a good understanding.  
His praise endures forever!**

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;  
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

### **SALUTATION and PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

**People: And also with you.**

Pastor: Let us pray.

Almighty God, You know we live in the midst of so many dangers that in our frailty we cannot stand upright. Grant strength 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.

**People: Amen.**

### **OLD TESTAMENT READING**     *Deuteronomy 18:15–20*

*(A new prophet like Moses)*

<sup>15</sup>“The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your brothers—it is to him you shall listen— <sup>16</sup>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.’ <sup>17</sup>And the LORD said to me, ‘They are right in what they have spoken. <sup>18</sup>I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brothers. And I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him. <sup>19</sup>And whoever will not listen to my words that he shall speak in my name, I myself will require it of him. <sup>20</sup>But the prophet who presumes to speak a word in my name that I have not commanded him to speak, or who speaks in the name of other gods, that same prophet shall die.’”

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

**GRADUAL** *Psalm 117:1–2a; 96:8*

**Praise the LORD, all nations!**

**Extol Him, all peoples!**

**For great is His steadfast love toward us,  
and the faithfulness of the LORD endures forever.**

**Ascribe to the LORD the glory due His name;  
bring an offering, and come into His courts!**

**EPISTLE** *1 Corinthians 8:1–13*

*(In our freedom, not causing others to stumble)*

<sup>1</sup>Concerning food offered to idols: we know that “all of us possess knowledge.” This “knowledge” puffs up, but love builds up. <sup>2</sup>If anyone imagines that he knows something, he does not yet know as he ought to know. <sup>3</sup>But if anyone loves God, he is known by God.

<sup>4</sup>Therefore, as to the eating of food offered to idols, we know that “an idol has no real existence,” and that “there is no God but one.” <sup>5</sup>For although there may be so-called gods in heaven or on earth—as indeed there are many “gods” and many “lords”—<sup>6</sup>yet 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.

<sup>7</sup>However, not all possess this knowledge. But some, through former association with idols, eat food as really offered to an idol, and their conscience, being weak, is defiled. <sup>8</sup>Food will not commend us to God. We are no worse off if we do not eat, and no better off if we do. <sup>9</sup>But take care that this right of yours does not somehow become a stumbling block to the weak. <sup>10</sup>For if anyone sees you who have knowledge eating in an idol’s temple, will he not be encouraged, if his conscience is weak, to eat food offered to idols? <sup>11</sup>And so by your knowledge this weak person is destroyed, the brother for whom Christ died. <sup>12</sup>Thus, sinning against your brothers and wounding their conscience when it is weak, you sin against Christ. <sup>13</sup>Therefore, if food makes my brother stumble, I will never eat meat, lest I make my brother stumble.

Lector: This is the Word of the Lord.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

**VERSE** *Mark 1:22a*

**People: Alleluia. They were astonished at His teaching, for He taught them as one who had authority. Alleluia.**

**HOLY GOSPEL**     *Mark 1:21–28*

*(Jesus teaches with authority and shows His power over unclean spirits.)*

Pastor:        The Holy Gospel according to St. Mark, the first chapter.

**People:        Glory to You, O Lord.**

<sup>21</sup>They went into Capernaum, and immediately on the Sabbath [Jesus] entered the synagogue and was teaching. <sup>22</sup>And they were astonished at his teaching, for he taught them as one who had authority, and not as the scribes. <sup>23</sup>And immediately there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit. And he cried out, <sup>24</sup>“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.” <sup>25</sup>But Jesus rebuked him, saying, “Be silent, and come out of him!” <sup>26</sup>And the unclean spirit, convulsing him and crying out with a loud voice, came out of him. <sup>27</sup>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.” <sup>28</sup>And at once his fame spread everywhere throughout all the surrounding region of Galilee.

Pastor:        This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**People:        Praise to You, O Christ.**

**HYMN OF THE DAY:** [\*Son of God, Eternal Savior\*](#)

**SERMON**

**APOSTLES' CREED**

**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.**

### **PRAYER OF THE CHURCH**

After each petition:

Pastor: ... Lord, in Your mercy:

**People: hear our prayer.**

At conclusion:

Pastor: ... through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

**People: Amen.**

### **LORD'S PRAYER** *Matthew 6:9–13*

**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 PRAYER**

Pastor: Let us pray.

Lord of all, by Your hands all things were made. In Your Word is power over order and chaos, light and darkness, life and death. Grant Your Spirit that we become instruments of Yours by Your grace, humbly serving You through the perfect Prophet and Savior of this world; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**People: Amen.**

**BENEDICTION**     *Psalm 32:10*

Pastor: Many are the sorrows of the wicked,

**People: but steadfast love surrounds the one who trusts in the LORD.**

Pastor: The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious unto you.

The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and + give you peace.

**People: Amen.**

**CLOSING HYMN:** [\*Jesus, Lead Thou On\*](#)

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