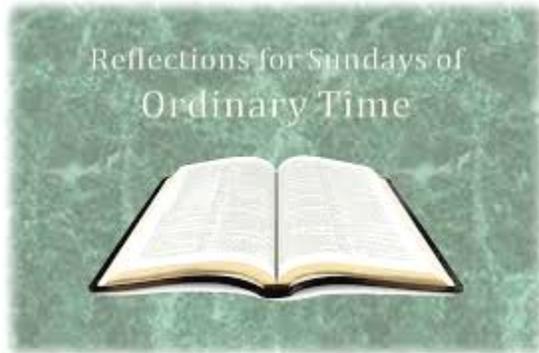


**For The Bulletin Of
January 28, 2018**



**THE FOURTH SUNDAY IN
WINTER'S ORDINARY TIME**

From Father Robert

Having called His first four disciples, Jesus goes to the village of Capernaum on the Sea of Galilee, where He begins to teach in the synagogue. He is confronted by evil, a man with an unclean spirit. There is foreshadowing here as we know that in the end, Jesus will lose His life in a confrontation with evil. What the reader knew from the beginning of Mark's gospel, namely, that Jesus was the Messiah, the Son of God, the man with the unclean spirit shouts out, "I know who you are – the Holy One of God!" No human being, only the spirits, call Jesus this during His earthly ministry. The only human being to call Him "the Son of God" will be the centurion, and only after he has witnessed Jesus die on the cross. Jesus' mission necessarily involves a confrontation with evil, suffering, and death, only after which His true identity as "Son of God" can be proclaimed by a human being.

As we have it in this story, Jesus commands the evil spirit to come out of

the man, and it obeys, though not without dramatic theatrics. The assembled people were understandably amazed. And, not surprisingly, Jesus' reputation spread.

As we will learn later in the gospel, Jesus' wonder-working will be tempered with suffering and ultimately death. We have here not the lilies-of-the-field Jesus but the Jesus Who encounters, battles, and is victorious over evil.

The term "authority" is used twice in this story. Jesus' teaching is not like the others, for He teaches with authority. As if to demonstrate the authority Jesus wields, even the unclean spirit obeys Him. If any wondered about His teaching authority, they need look no further than the man from whom the unclean spirit was expelled.

It is significant too that the disciples were with Jesus during this encounter. We see that no sooner had the disciples been called by Jesus to be His followers than did they encounter evil. The disciples are in relationship with Jesus, and as such they witness the opposition He faces. Later they will encounter similar opposition. Even though the gospel does not tell the story, we, like those in Mark's community know that many of Jesus' disciples lost their lives too in confrontations with evil.

Living The Paschal Mystery

Perhaps we do not like to hear it, but the Christian life (and, in fact, any life) is riddled by encounters with evil. We learn in today's gospel that Jesus is more powerful than that. Jesus has authority and by that authority He can dispel what is oppositional and troublesome. Once we become followers of Jesus we will

still encounter challenges and hostility. Some might wish to think that becoming Christian inoculates one from having those encounters. But the gospel (and our own lived experience) tells a different story.

Even though we will continue to face such encounters, we are comforted in knowing that Jesus has authority over all. A preacher once phrased it this way: “Rest assured in your baptism.” By that he meant that our baptism configures us to Christ, Who will be with us. Of course, this doesn’t mean that we disregard precautions, or that we walk around in a state of naivete. Remember that Jesus Himself was killed. It does mean that we have an ally, the author of life. Once we know this, we can rest assured. Even death itself is not the final word.

About Liturgy: Reclaiming Authority

We need to reclaim a few words in our church today. “Traditional” doesn’t mean old or stodgy; it means being connected to something bigger than oneself. “Hierarchy” is not code for “whatever Father wants”; it describes how we all matter and must all do our part. And “authority” isn’t about power. It’s about being authentic and true to one’s self and the community. It requires integrating one’s experience into the current situation and speaking prophetically with wisdom, prudence, compassion, and courage. Authority is not lauded over others but is shared to draw the community together to act with confidence and hope only if necessary.

Our leaders and all who participate in the liturgy have authority, not because of any title or degree. We have authority when what we say and do together is “of

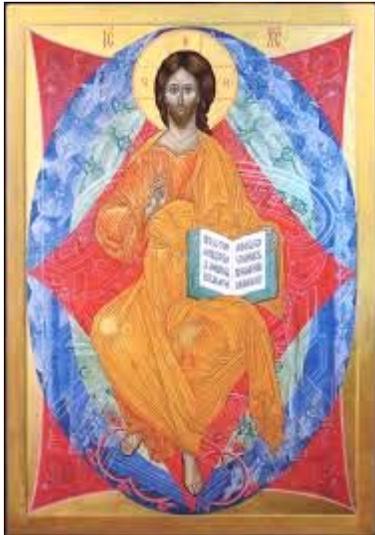
God” through Christ in the Spirit, flowing from our baptismal rights and responsibilities. We have authority when we know where we have come from as a universal church and a local community and have listened to the wisdom of both those who have come before us and those who are the young church, called to be prophets for today. We have authority when we do not choke our communities with rigid rubricism but we use the tradition and rubrics to attend with creativity and compassion to the needs of real people seeking real hope for the real demons from which they suffer.

Most of all, we have authority when all we say and do is done with the abundant and merciful love of God, the author of love, Who spoke with human love through Jesus, and Who continues to speak through us, the people of God.



At each liturgy this weekend, it is once again my privilege as Pastor to present the Annual Report for 2017. Much more than a listing of facts and figures, it is a reminder of how God has worked through our parish in and through the past year, our response to the invitation and challenge of the Gospel, and an accounting for our Stewardship of Time, Talent, and Treasure, the use of our gifts, and the way we have worked through

Staffing, programs, outreach, social justice initiatives, to do our part in building the Kingdom of God in our midst. It also gives an accounting of our financial responsibilities and presents the Budget for 2018. I hope you will take the time to read the hard copy that is made available to you and that it will provide you the opportunity to join us in prayer, in thanksgiving for all that has been, and all that is yet to be in 2018. I hope it will also inspire you to become more involved, to do your part, and to take more ownership of the parish.



Blessing and Dedication of The Christ in Majesty Icon

At the conclusion of the Liturgy on Sunday, February 11th, we will Bless and Dedicate the new Christ in Majesty Icon that has been created and installed at the tympanum over the central entrance to the church. It has been made possible through the generosity of **Don Benson** and has been given **In Loving Memory of Don's Wife, Sheryl Young Benson**. I hope you will plan to be present with us for this wonderful event. With the installation and dedication of this Icon, the exterior art work of the church is now complete.



Lent begins this year on Wednesday, February 14th with the celebration of Ash Wednesday. Our liturgies that day have been scheduled as follows:

8:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist and the Blessing and Giving of Ashes

12:00 Noon Liturgy of the Word and the Blessing and Giving of Ashes

5:30 p.m. Liturgy of the Word and the Blessing and Giving of Ashes

7:30 p.m. Solemn Sung Evening Prayer and the Blessing and Giving of Ashes

On Tuesday, February 13th, following the 8:00 a.m. Liturgy of the Word and Holy Communion Service, the palms from last year's Palm Sunday will be burned in the brazier in preparation for Ash Wednesday. **Please remember to return your dried palm fronds from last year and place them in the receptacle in the narthex.**

We are also very pleased to welcome the parishioners from St. John's Lutheran Church here in Antioch who will join us for our 12:00 Noon Liturgy. With the retirement of their former Pastor, **Rev. Linda Vogelgesang**, they do not have a pastor and asked to be welcomed

to join us for this day. Please welcome them warmly. I have also invited them to join us for any other liturgies, especially Holy Week, and the Triduum.

Thank
you

...to our faithful parishioners who arrive early each Saturday morning to clean and prepare both the church and parish hall for the weekend: **Emilia Freking, Kathy Romeo, Angela Bueno, Rose Salamanca, Mency Osborne, Carole Miller, and Jack Goncalves.**

...to our faithful corps of parishioners who clean and maintain the bathrooms in both the church and parish hall throughout the week: **Steve Rojek, Virginia Noack, Mary Ewing, Patricia Britton, and Harlan Young.**

...to **Dilcia Aparacio** who does such an excellent job of washing, ironing, and caring for the Sacred Linens.

...to our Sacristans and Altar Guild who prepare the sanctuary for the celebration of Eucharist each week:

Peter Degl'Innocenti, Pam and Rich Confetti, Vincent Rodriguez, Harlan Young, Rowena Cayaban, Monika Kauer, Cynthia Enrique, Belen Farin, Nancy Santos and Rose Salamanca.

...to **our counting teams** who are here every week to count the weekly collections.

...to our volunteers who assisted in the parish office last week:

Melodye Costanza, Harlan Young, Alicia Perez, Yvette Young, Joe Fanfa and Bev Iacona.

...to our St. Vincent de Paul and Mobile Mall volunteers who transported last

week's donations: **Bob Carvalho and Barbara Jackson.**

...to our faithful weekly bulletin assembly team: **Bob Carvalho, Carole Miller, Dave Costanza, Beth Enea, and Richard Enea.**

...to our wonderful Parking Lot Security who keep watch over our vehicles during the weekend liturgies: **Don Benson, Steve Rojek and Jose Palomino.**

Catholic Charities of the East Bay – Transforming Lives Tour

Catholic Charities of the East Bay is the social services arm for the Diocese of Oakland and one of the largest provider of social services throughout Alameda and Contra Costa Counties. We help families in need rise above poverty and live self-sufficient lives. Learn about the programs of Catholic Charities at an upcoming **Transforming Lives Tour** here at St. Ignatius of Antioch Church on Sunday, February 4th after the 10:00 am Liturgy. You will learn about:

- . Legal immigration and refugee resettlement services
- . Homelessness prevention through housing and utilities support
- . An update on "Claire's House," home for trafficked minors
- . School-based behavioral health services programs for youth
- . Grief counseling and family support for victims of crime

You will hear from staff on how Catholic Charities moves youth and families from crisis to stability to prosperity. All are welcome.

