

14 January 2025 - Tuesday of the 1st week

[Heb 2:5-12; Mk 1:21-28](#)

### Homily

The Gospel begins with these words: ‘ *Immediately on the Sabbath He (Jesus) went to the synagogue and taught there* ’. Let's look at the context of this account in Mark's Gospel. We are at the beginning of the Gospel. Jesus was baptised and spent forty days in the desert, where He was tempted; then He returned to Galilee and chose His disciples. Then, ' says the Gospel text, “”He went with His disciples to Capernaum, and *immediately*, on the Sabbath, He entered the synagogue to teach. Immediately He healed a man afflicted with an unclean spirit.

This was the beginning of Jesus' ministry according to Mark's Gospel, the first time He spoke in public and the first miracle He performed. It is at this point that the Gospels of Matthew and Luke place the Sermon on the Mount. Mark, on the other hand, does not mention the content of the sermon at all. The only thing he wants to emphasise is that Jesus spoke with such authority that everyone was stunned. But there's more. The two things Mark says Jesus did were a) He taught and b) He cast out evil spirits, and He did both with authority.

Mark also emphasises the contrast between the evil spirit and Jesus. In the mentality of the time, it was believed that it was possible to cast out an evil spirit with formulas, and above all that you could exercise authority over a spirit or a person if you could call it by its name. This is why the evil spirit said to Jesus: ‘ *I know who you are, you are the Holy One of God* ’. This is certainly not a declaration of faith, but an effort on the part of the evil spirit to take Jesus under its control. But Jesus uses no such artifice. He simply says: ‘ *Be quiet* (no doubt he used a more popular expression) *and come out of that man* ’. A simple command, but expressed with authority!

That's why people are astonished: ‘He teaches with authority,’ they say, ‘and He casts out demons with authority’.

In the people of Israel, before the coming of Christ, there were three important functions or mediations, interdependent but distinct from each other: that of the king, that of the priest and that of the prophet. The king was responsible for the political sphere and the priest for the cultic sphere; but the prophet was the bearer of the Word of God in all aspects of life, whether individual or social.

Jesus always manifested Himself not as a priest or king, but as a

Document extrait du [site de l'abbaye Notre-Dame de Scourmont](#), qui se trouve sur le territoire de Forges, à sept kilomètres au sud de la ville de Chimay, en Belgique. Notre-Dame de Scourmont est une abbaye de l'Ordre Cistercien de la Stricte Observance.

---

prophet. But He is a totally new kind of prophet. He is not simply the bearer of divine messages, but He speaks them in His own name, and in His own name He exercises authority over evil spirits. Later, He will send His disciples to teach and cast out demons in His name.

Healing, like teaching, was not an individual service offered to isolated individuals; it was part of the building up of the Kingdom. It was a work of love, introducing the sick person into the saving power of the Paschal Mystery.

The celebration of the Eucharist is our daily access to the saving power of Jesus. As we celebrate the Eucharist, let us approach Jesus in faith, exposing to him all our physical, psychological and spiritual wounds and illnesses, and he will give us access to new life.

Armand VEILLEUX ocso