

The Mission of Jesus

*A Missionary Commentary on the
Sunday Readings*

Sunday Readings

Job 7:1-4, 6-7

Psalms 147:1-2, 3-4, 5-6

1 Corinthians 9:16-19, 22-23

Mark 1:29-39

[USCCB link to the Sunday Readings](#)

Here, in the first chapter of the first gospel ever written, Jesus is **being** mission. He proclaims God's Kingdom, calls disciples, casts out demons and heals the sick. He preaches, prays, and visits villages in the area to preach. "For this purpose, have I come."

What was Simon's experience? Over the past few weeks, we've read how Jesus called him while fishing with his brother Andrew. How did Simon feel when Jesus looked at him and said, "I will make you fishers of men." Simon goes to Capernaum and enters the synagogue. He, too, is astonished at Jesus' teaching and is amazed when Jesus commands the "unclean spirits." How did Simon feel when he saw Jesus' fame spread "throughout the whole region of Galilee?"

Simon brings Jesus home. Jesus immediately cures Simon's mother-in-law of her fever. That evening, the "whole town" gathered at Simon's door, bringing those who "were ill or possessed by demons." Jesus cures the sick and drives out demons.

Did another crowd gather at Simon's door the next morning? Jesus is not there. Simon goes looking for him and finds him in prayer. "Everyone is looking for you," he says. But Jesus will not go back. Rather, he wants Simon to go with him to the "nearby villages" so he can preach there too.

Jesus says no to Simon, who suddenly has the most famous house in all of Galilee. Jesus also says yes to Simon who is learning how to be a "fisher of men." Jesus is on mission to the nearby villages so he can preach the Kingdom of God there. His disciples are on mission too.

Mother Teresa said that missionaries are not called to be successful, only faithful. That is true in the face of failure and success. Like Jesus, we must be faithful to the mission God has given us and go forth to the "nearby villages" to preach the Gospel.

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Notes on the Sunday Readings

First Reading

We hear a full-throated lament from Job about the drudgery of life, the misery of a slave in search of shade and the torment of endless nights. Yet, he is restless. His days pass swiftly. Deep within is a longing for happiness and yet happiness eludes.

Psalm

The Lord will heal the broken hearted for he is gracious, he rebuilds what was torn down, gathers the lost, heals the wounded. God's power and wisdom have no limits.

Second Reading

Saint Paul reminds missionary-disciples that the gospel gives us freedom, power, and authority which we, then, relinquish so we can be weak with the weak, a slave to others, all in the hope of winning "over as many as possible," and to assure a share in the gospel.

Gospel

Jesus cured Simon's mother-in-law. He approached her, grasped her hand, and helped her up. In the evening, they brought "all who were ill or possessed by demons" and he cured them. Jesus rose "very early before dawn" to pray. Simon searched for him because "everyone is looking" for him. Jesus does not go back. He goes forward "to the nearby villages" so he can preach there. That is his "purpose," his mission. He goes to their synagogues, preaching and driving out demons "throughout the whole of Galilee."

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