

January 29, 2012

4th Sunday in Ordinary Time

First Reading: Deuteronomy 18:15-20

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 7:32-35

Gospel Reading: Mark 1:21-28

Homilist: Father Jeff Poirot

Tell me for a moment of the people who are authority figures in your life or in our world. (At this time several people in the assembly named people of authority including God, the pope, Jesus, the president, elected members of congress, parents, etc.)

When we think of those who have authority in our life or in our world, we often think about parents, teachers, police officers, bosses, in general we think of those who form or tell us what to do and what not to do, as well as those who give us guidance and direct us the way that we should go. Those who have authority have it because they have earned it, are given it because of the position they have assumed or because they have our respect for how

they have been an influence in our life. But with Jesus we see authority of a different kind.

In the Gospel today we see Jesus teaching with authority and using his authority for good. It is an authority that has not been delegated to him like the prophets. It is an authority that does not come from him quoting others, like the scribes or the Pharisees would often do when they were preaching and teaching.

It is an authority that he has because he is the Son of God.

The people of that day recognized it and followed him.

But do we recognize it? Do we recognize the authority of Christ?

To recognize the authority of someone else is to become subject to their guidance.

They give you direction showing you what is right from what is not, and authority properly used achieves betterment for you and all who follow it. So if we recognize the authority of Jesus then we are willing to subject our lives, our actions and all that we do to Him. But what then does that mean if we follow what Christ directs us to do? What it means is that we must be a people then who are different, a people who seek Christ's direction in all that we do and we begin that by showing reverence to His word and His presence among us. Yet how often do we find ourselves doing what many of you may be doing right now? Our minds drift during the readings and the homily to thoughts of what we are going to eat after mass, we go through the actions of stand-up sit down and "with your spirit" and therefore we fail to truly receive the Word of God as it is proclaimed and do not live the word through the example of our own lives finding it easier

just to follow what society directs us towards? How often do we come forward to receive the Eucharist thinking, "Why didn't Fr. Jeff come over to my side this Sunday", not fully considering that we are receiving the presence of Christ in the Eucharist? Then leave here no different than when we arrived at Mass because we are directed in life by everything but Jesus whom we just received?

Does Christ direct your life in the word you hear and His presence you receive in the Eucharist? Those who saw and listened to Jesus not only realized his authority but they sought to follow Him and to live their lives differently. Each time we come to mass we receive His word in the readings and we receive His presence in the Eucharist. As we go forth from here we should live our lives differently because we carry the presence of Christ with us and share that with others as we go out into the world.