

*Let us be still and ask the Holy Spirit to be with us*

Dear Father,  
Be with us as we pray. Open our ears to hear your Word in the Gospel. Unite us in faith, hope and love as we pray together. Send your Holy Spirit to inspire and sustain us in our mission.  
We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Amen.



## Gospel

**Matthew 22:15-21**

Jesus and his followers went as far as Capernaum, and as soon as the Sabbath came Jesus went to the synagogue and began to teach. And his teaching made a deep impression on them because, unlike the scribes, he taught them with authority. In their synagogue just then there was a man possessed by an unclean spirit, and it shouted, 'What do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are: the Holy One of God.' But Jesus said sharply, 'Be quiet! Come out of him!' And the unclean spirit threw the man into convulsions and with a loud cry went out of him. The people were so astonished that they started asking each other what it all meant. 'Here is a teaching that is new' they said 'and with authority behind it: he gives orders even to unclean spirits and they obey him.' And his reputation rapidly spread everywhere, through all the surrounding Galilean countryside.

*What words or phrases struck you in Sunday's Gospel reading? What might God be saying to you in and through the Gospel?*

## Reflection

What seems to impress those gathered in the Capernaum synagogue was the authority with which Jesus taught. Jesus' teaching is new its authority and power. The Gospel may prompt us to reflect on the sources of our own authority. There is an authority that comes from formal sources but this coin is quickly exhausted if not grounded in a deeper authority. There is an authority that finds its source in a teacher's or leader's ability to inspire and motivate those they serve and lead in a relationship characterised by trust, caring, and authenticity.

As evangelists, there is a critical measure of authenticity for those to whom we proclaim the Good News. Do we speak and act as one whose person and life has been shaped, indeed transformed, by a relationship with God, through Christ, in the Holy Spirit? Is our identity and purpose in life inextricable linked with those with whom we teach and serve? Is it linked in solidarity with them, especially those possessed by 'unclean spirits' - those who cry out silently for our help? As your reputation as a teacher, minister or leader spreads to others, what do you most hope people will be saying about you?

- Greg Wilson, CSYMA Board Member

## Lord of all,

Grant us to grow in a deeper authority, an authority with and for others.  
An authority characterised by trust, caring, and authenticity.  
An authority grounded in a relationship with you Father, Son and Holy Spirit.  
We ask this through Jesus Christ, the Holy One of God,

Amen.