

*No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

Romans 8:37-39

In the Name of the father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost +

We are not comfortable taking about or even considering that demons do exist. However, we just professed to believe in things visible and invisible. We understand as Christians that there are powers and principalities beyond what we can understand or image. We know they exist because we know they will all be placed in subject under Christ and then presented to the Father at the end of time.

More specifically we have today the Gospel record of an encounter between Jesus and a demon. It should be of some interest to us that the demon knows who Jesus is. The others in the Synagogue may not have a clue, other than the fact he seems to be a learned man, perhaps a rabbi or prophet. And then the healing occurs. Yes, I am using the word healing specifically, because that is what we need to understand happened. The man with the demon was healed, when Jesus commanded the spirit to come out of the man.

Let's see if we can consider each movement of the Gospel today and consider how or what applies to our life:

Jesus has just begun His ministry; most people had not yet heard of Him, fewer still knew Him. He has called some of His disciples and then He leads them to Capernaum and to the Synagogue. Capernaum was the home of the Apostles Simon Peter, Andrew, James and John and Matthew. We should consider the echo of the Nativity here. Jesus has come to their home town, to their Synagogue (Their Church) to be with them, to teach them and heal them.

Our Home, our Place where we believe everything is good and holy and healthy and wonderful. But it is not and perhaps they never recognized the fact that one tormented by a demon was among them. But Jesus knows, He knows who is suffering and who is in need of healing. As Jesus enters the Synagogue and the man with the demon stands and says the most startling thing, *"What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are, the Holy One of God."*

Have you come to destroy us? US!!! I know who you are!

The demons know who Jesus is. But do we know who the demons are? Do we even realize they exist, where they come from and how to battle them?

The demons are born of our sin. And since we know that sin exists, it follows that we must understand that the demons exist and they torment us, make us sick and kill us. I'm sure by now you are growing a bit uncomfortable and perhaps considering that this homily is one that you would like to soon forget and never consider again.

That is just what the demons want us to do, for their power comes when we fail to understand their existence and the Glorious Power of God over them.

What are the demons? Consider the Seven Deadly sins.

1. Pride – the primordial sin. What demons proceed from this sin? War, plague pestilence and dis-ease of the created order is created anytime one man thinks himself superior to another

2. Lust – what demons are born of lust? The destruction of Marriages, the diseases which come from the improper use of our sexuality, the pain and loneliness of broken persons used and yet unloved...and the list goes on.

3. Gluttony – Talk with any doctor - our physical appetites are not limited to our sexuality, but include every appetite we possess.

Of course each of these desires are created by God and are essential to our survival, but we can distort them, misuse them and whether it is alcohol, food, exercise or the formation of our intellects.

The imbalance in our lives causes many different demons to be born of our sin. Broken relationship, illness of every kind and the separation of one human being from others as people become unimportant to them in the pursuit of their desire.

4. Greed – how many hours could be talk of this sin in our world today? This sin born of pride tells us that we can and should have more than we possess.

The demons that appear in our lives and destroy not only ourselves but others as we seek to have not only what we need but what we desire and believe we have the right to possess. Poverty, hunger and the destruction of families and lives as the Greed of One unleashes these demons.

5. Sloth is perhaps the most insidious of the deadly sins. Like all the others it is born of a God created and normal human reaction. When we work we grow tired and in need of rest.

However when our rest becomes an avoidance of work, when we are focused not on being productive and contributing to the common good, then our pride and self centered attitude released the demons which first imprison us in our fruitless pursuits and then affect the lives of many as we are a drain on all the Created Order.

6. Anger is another of the sins which release so many demons. War, pestilence and plagues, death and the destruction of the human soul all come from Anger. But like the other sins this one also has two elements which also appear to be identical, but are not.

Here we get the first inkling of how we combat the demons and how God ultimately defeats them forever.

There are two types of Anger; one is sinful and leads to death and destruction. The other is life giving and born not of sin, but of holiness. If anger is born of pride or greed or lust or any other sin, it releases the demons of destruction.

However, if the anger we feel is righteous anger over the mistreatment of others. If what stirs in our soul is a desire to right what is wrong not for ourselves but for those who are suffering, then we become instruments of God. And if it is His will he will use us as He has used many in the ages past.

7. We arrive at the last of the Seven Deadly Sin from which spring the demons which torment us and any who share our life. Envy is perhaps the most clearly recognized sin that is born of the sin of pride. It is the logical outcome of being consumed with the sin of

pride and allowing the demons released to rule our lives. Envy is simply the understanding that no matter who has or possess an object, talent or gift it should be ours.

How many have suffered because of envy? How many demons have tormented those who embrace this evil thing?

For no matter how much we have our desire is insatiable. The demons will not allow us to rejoice in what we have or share the joy of others over the gifts they have. We become isolated, angry and fearful that another envy is greater than our will take what we have.

The sins are real, their affects are real and the demons that can torment us are real. So what is the remedy for our sinfulness? And what allows us the power to defeat the demons?

Love – When we love Blessed John tells us we are of God, for God is Love. Yes, it was Jesus who came to Capernaum and cast out the demon. For Jesus is God and God is Love, so we can and should say that Love cast out the demon and set the man free. When we love and share the Love of God, we free ourselves and we free others to power of evil and sins which bind us.

God came to live among us to show us the nature of Love in the man Jesus the Christ. Even the demons who saw Him knew who He was. And they knew He was Love and the Love would defeat them now in this time of mortal life and forever.

Our choice is simple. Do we stand and recognize that God came to be among us? Do we seek to share His life to Live in Him and to allow Him to live in us?

Or do we allow our ignorance of the reality of demons and Angels; of sin and salvation, of life and death, to grow in us so that we become blind and unable to see the truth.

God wishes us to open our eyes, our minds and our hearts.

To realize the power of His Love to save us and set us free from every sin, every demon and finally to lead us into His Kingdom

To be with Him forever and live in the light of His Love

Amen