

Gospel Reflection on Mark 6: 7-13
15th Sunday in Ordinary Time Year B – 12th July 15'

What is this *authority* that Jesus gives to the Twelve – to each of us? This *authority* is at the heart of every human being and it is the voice of Truth grounded in Love longing to emerge and be known, longing to be seen and heard. Too often though, we *give this authority* away and ignore it within ourselves. We can give it to our political systems, to religious institutions, to the expectations of our culture and families and friends etc. We can give it away to fear and other emotions that have the capacity to cripple us because we hand over our inner *authority* to that which is outside of us. Whenever we do this problems will most certainly emerge.

A brief example of what it looks like to give our inner *authority* away may help us understand the implications of this with a little more clarity. The current shocking issue facing the Church with regard child sexual abuse is too quickly and easily *blamed* solely on the hierarchy and religious. Regardless of any of the flaws and corruption within the hierarchical structure and operations of the institutional Church including its proclaimed authority over the *People of God* over many centuries, most of us (adults) have given (mostly unconsciously) the institutional Church that *authority* at the expense of ignoring or losing our own. That was and is a grave error on everyone's part and now we are witnessing what can happen when we give our inner *authority* away.

Jesus was outraged by the way the people were being *lorded over* by the religious authorities of his time and his mission was to wake us all up to our own inner *authority* and then teach us to live faithfully from that place regardless of any opposition we may experience. When we look at the life of Jesus we can see that it is no easy life to live out of our own inner *authority*. How much easier is it for us to just hand our *authority* over to someone else, be it a person or any institution? But then when something goes wrong we seem to scape goat those to whom we have given this *authority* without seeing that we too have had some role in it all. None of this is a matter of condemnation – it is an invitation by Jesus to *awaken* to our own hearts and to who we truly are. The scars and open wounds created from this time in our history are very real and shocking for everyone and cry out for healing for the abused, the abusers and all of us. This healing process is dependent upon us all.

Jesus longs for us to *remember* who we are – we are made in Love, by Love and for Love. When we give our inner *authority* away to anyone or anything we have forgotten who we really are. Jesus knew the religious leaders would not let go of their own power and authority and he knew that the only authentic way to change this was to help those with no sense of their own *authority or power* to remember who they truly were/are and open them/us to the *authority* of Love within us. Once they awakened to this Reality then the religious leaders would no longer be able to *lord it over them* – their oppressive power and corrupted authority would become powerless. The only *authority* remaining would be one of loving service to EVERYONE without exception. Within all of this we would all become restored to our *original* Blessing of Love. Do we really want to understand who we truly are through this extraordinary Word of God today? If so, Jesus is *summoning* us.

Jesus tells us to take *nothing* for the journey into this inner *authority*. All the external things that we have relied on all our lives will be of no value in the place where Jesus is *sending* us. We are being *sent* to a place like we have never know before and yet we will feel strangely at home there. If we are not feeling at home or feeling unwelcomed then Jesus tells us we must leave that place behind but continue the journey in Love. We are not to allow ourselves to be contaminated or embittered by rejection or oppression etc. Love itself must be our only guide. How often do we become imprisoned or stuck in rejection, betrayal or oppression etc? But Jesus says to us 'no', keep moving forward in Love and trust our inner *authority* no matter what we come up against. *Shake off* anything that sticks to you except Love. What a powerful Word this is for us today.

Until we learn to listen deeply to the silence within our own hearts we will not really understand the depth and invitation of God's Word to us today. If every God believing

person learned to listen deeply and opened into our own inner *authority* (that knows only Love) can we even begin to imagine how our world would change this very day? The politics of fear mongering, division, exclusion, injustice, prejudice, oppression, rejection, grasping for power and self-made authority at any cost etc, by any nation or institution would be made powerless – they would lose their self-made authority because the people reclaimed their own *inner authority*. Whenever we consciously sanction any of the above drives or motivations we can be sure that we have not yet opened into our inner *authority* – in fact we are the *sick* ones in need of *repentance*. Will we ask to receive such this Grace of *repentance*? Are we open to enter into a different consciousness brought about by Love?

Judy Cannato in her beautiful book *Field of Compassion* writes: “these words are “ours,” and they become true only if enough of us engage what the Spirit is trying to tell us not only here, but in every place we look with contemplative eyes. The new consciousness asks each of us to be a whole, an open and awake “me” that is a prerequisite for being the new “we.” It is together that we move forward, listening to the incomprehensible holy mystery who is inviting us to live a new story, to embrace new powers, and to manifest a morphogenic field that will change the course of human history.” Page 191 Do we have the courage to pray today that this Spirit of Love will enlighten the eyes of our heart that we might see how great is the hope to which we are called” Gospel Acclamation Eph 1:17-18 © Annemarie Reiner