

## Reflection on Gospels Mark 4: 35-41 and Mark 1: 21-28

- **Faith:** *Strong belief and complete trust in God. Believing before seeing.*
- **Love:** *to be deeply committed and connected to someone. An intense feeling of deep affection.*
- This weekend (Saturday and Sunday) our Gospel readings speak to us about the important relationship between Faith and Love.
- This Saturday our Gospel reading presents us with the account of Jesus and the Apostles setting sail on the Sea of Galilee. Jesus, exhausted from preaching to the crowds is asleep in the boat. Suddenly an intense storm kicks up and the boat is tossed about and taking on water. The terrified Apostles wake Jesus calling out: “Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?” Jesus wakes up and miraculously calms the storm. But He also poses an important question to His apostles: “Why are you terrified? Do you not yet have faith?”
- Let’s examine this passage in light of the definitions of faith and love just presented above.
- Unquestionably the apostles loved Jesus. They gave up everything to follow Him and be with Him. Their lives had meaning and direction because of Jesus.
- But what about their faith? Does this scene show a strong faith? Complete trust? Not really. They were fearful, panicking even though Jesus was right there in the boat. They cried out: “Don’t you care about us? Do something already!” (How many times have we said these words to God in our own lives?)
- The Apostles loved Jesus. But they were still learning who Jesus really is, the Son of God. So their faith was in its infancy, just forming. And when it was tested we see some strengthening was needed. We hear it in

their question: “Who is this that even the wind and sea obey Him?”

- Now let’s consider this Sunday’s Gospel. We find Jesus in the synagogue in the presence of a man possessed by evil spirits.
- We hear the evil spirits mocking Jesus with contempt: “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!”
- Again we see a miraculous response by Jesus as He quiets the evil spirits and casts them out of the man.
- Let’s examine this passage in light of the definition of Faith and Love.
- You might say the evil spirits had faith. Perhaps more than those apostles in that boat. They had complete belief and trust that this Jesus was the Messiah, the Son of God. Of that they were certain.
- But their response entirely lacked love. “Go away, leave us alone. What do you want of me?”
- St. Augustine wrote about these evil spirits: “Faith is mighty, but without love it profits nothing...”
- This weekend’s Gospels remind us to be a true follower of Christ, Faith and love must go hand in hand.
- Notice also that those mocking words of rejection by the evil spirit came from the lips of a man. This challenges us to question whether we can or do say these words, even if in a more subtle way.
- We too can be attached to our particular set of demons, so to speak, and hesitate to let go of them. We each have our list: fears, anxieties, grudges, lusts, jealousies, prejudices, tempers, vanity, pride, hatreds. We all struggle with one or more of these “demons” at various times in life.

- The good news is, as we see in both Gospels this weekend, Jesus has power to cast out these demons from our lives. He has authority and command over physical nature (as we saw Him calm the wind and storm) and He has command over human nature.
- Jesus can calm our fears and anxieties; He can cast out those demons that plague us – if we let Him.
- He clearly has the power, what He waits for is the permission.
- That is ours to give. To quiet those storms in our lives; to cast out those demons ...
- We must give our faith – strong belief and trust in Him, belief and trust that He loves us deeply and is concerned for our well being and can make a difference. AND we must give our love – welcoming Him into our day-to-day life with great joy and affection.