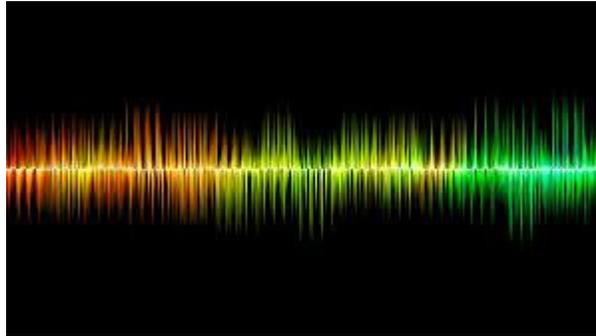


# Christ Our Hope Catholic Church

## *Faith in Laity Corner*



**3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday Ordinary Times**  
**Monday, January 29, 2018**

**Year 2/Cycle B**  
**Dt. 18: 15-19; Mk 1:21-28**

## *Hearing The Voice*

As we celebrate the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Ordinary Times, the Old Testament Reading from the book of Deuteronomy recalls for us, that if there was any voice that was heard from the distant past for the Jews, it had to be the voice of Moses. As God used his voice to represent Him before Pharaoh when the demand that the Israelites were to leave Egypt. It was Moses' voiced instructions to begin for the Jews what became a festival to last forever- the Passover. It was again Moses' voice to command the thousands of Jews across the Red Sea; it again was his voice used to introduce the rules by which this young Jewish nation was to govern-The Ten Commandments. For the Jews, Moses was a voice with which they were familiar.

There is a popular TV show viewed by millions of people called 'The Voice'. It introduced each new contestant to the backs of their judges, and it is the 'voice' that emanates with the song, which may or may not cause each judge to turn around. Well, St. Mark was introducing his readers to the 'New Voice' the only 'Voice' we need to *hear*, as the Gospel readings start today.

*"Then they came to Capernaum, and on the Sabbath  
, he entered the synagogue and taught" (Mk. 1:21)*

Jesus had begun according to Mark, His public ministry. Jesus and His new group of Apostles were going to the meeting place of the people in that community- the synagogue. When Jesus began to speak something began to happen, people who were probably talking stopped, those who were not even

listening began to sit up and those who were on the outside, came closer to get a glimpse of this ‘new Teacher’. What made it so different? What caught their attention on this regular Sabbath morning?

*“The people were astonished at his teaching.” (Mk. 1:22)*

Just as in the TV show it was ‘The VOICE’. What was different with the voices of their Pharisees and Scribes vs this *new Voice*?

*“He taught them as one having authority and not as the scribes.” (Mk. 1:22)*

The voice demanded them to look, to listen, to hear, to move closer. There was a wisdom behind the words of the speaker... a hidden knowledge that their regular preachers and teachers lacked. The voice and message resonated with the hearts of those who were within ear-range of this speaker. Not to be without incident a certain man, who was classified by the Pharisees as one possessed by evil spirit hears the ‘voice’ and attempts to reveal the identity of this new speaker.

*“What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth?” (Mk. 1:24)*

Now, this did cause an even greater stir, this new speaker, came from Nazareth? Of all the people to know His identity was a man possessed by the devil? How come the Scribes and Pharisees never heard of Him before, where was He hiding? This man spoke as one who has done this often, not a newcomer.

*“Have you come to destroy us?” (Mk.1: 24)*

This whole conversation was going on above the heads of everyone else. What could cause evil to speak out in fear? So as not to interfere with God's timing, Jesus preformed His first healing in St. Mark.

*“Jesus rebuked him and said, “Quiet! Come out of him.” (Mk. 1:25)*

Who is this man, preaching the Scriptures with authority, confronting an evil spirit and now would this evil spirit, comply? All eyes were riveted to this scene between this possessed man and ‘*the voice*’. Who would win, is the preachers as good as He spoke?

*“The unclean spirit convulsed him and with a loud cry came out of him.” (Mk. 1:26)*

The evil spirit moved out with shrieks and shouting... the man falls, foams and then relaxes. It was something to behold! This would be the main talk in the town for months to come. What the people saw, was not to be forgotten!!

Our take away... we have many voices screaming and shouting at us, offering this, that, free, discounted, false, special offers. What voices are we listening to in our society? What are the main voices that appeal to us? Often I hear people like to hear a particular voice over the quality and substance of the message. Many people swear by the televangelists and are willing to TV touch the

screen, to connect with the voice; yet, are unwilling to help a neighbor, visit a friend or forgive a relative. Not one of the learned members in the synagogue that day recognized the Voice of the

*“Holy One of God!” (Mk. 1: 24)*

The evil one knows God, evil listens and obeys His Voice. Question is: Are we the people of God able to recognize His voice in our lives. Not always the words and the message we like to hear or the message we want to examine, but it is the voice that is the authentic truth, the holy, the humble and the loving. What voices do you listen to daily? What voice are we to others in this chaotic world?

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*May we remember to pray for the souls of our 2 parishioners,  
Mr. William Turner and Ms. Carolyn Pate who was buried on Friday. May  
God grant them His eternal rest and peace.*

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Faith in Laity Corner is a weekly review of Sunday’s readings written by  
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