

February 3, 2025

Daily Reflections



THE POWER OF BELIEF!

By Sister Jayne Helmlinger, CSJ

An Excerpt from Today's Gospel

Jesus and his disciples came to the other side of the sea, to the territory of the Gerasenes. When he got out of the boat, at once a man from the tombs who had an unclean spirit met him. The man had been dwelling among the tombs, and no one could restrain him any longer, even with a chain. ... Catching sight of Jesus from a distance, he ran up and prostrated himself before him, crying out in a loud voice, "What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I adjure you by God, do not torment me!" (He had been saying to him, "Unclean spirit, come out of the man!") He asked him, "What is your name?" He replied, "Legion is my name. There are many of us." And he pleaded earnestly with him not to drive them away from that territory. Now a large herd of swine was feeding there on the hillside. And they pleaded with him, "Send us into the swine. Let us enter them." And he let them, and the unclean spirits came out and entered the swine. The herd of about two thousand rushed down a steep bank into the sea, where they were drowned. ... As Jesus was getting into the boat, the man who had been possessed pleaded to remain with him. But Jesus would not permit him but told him instead, "Go home to

your family and announce to them all that the Lord in his pity has done for you.”

MARK 5:1-20

Reflection

I can picture this scene so clearly. Jesus sends the swine into the sea because Legion is now in them and out of the tortured man who used to roam the tombs in agony. This passage from Mark is scary in many ways because it is about a man possessed by the devil. Jesus overcomes the evil present in this poor man and saves him man by commanding that Legion leave the man and enter the swine.

Breaking open this passage can lead in many directions. First, there is the untiring zeal of Jesus going from village to village as he performs his public ministry of healing and teaching. I can only imagine how tiring this must have been for him. Don't we all experience fatigue and exhaustion at times in our own lives? And yet, Jesus immediately hears the man calling out to him and turns his attention to this poor soul's needs. It helps me to realign my own priorities and look to see where I can remain focused on the ministries I'm called to at this time in my life.

As Mark's gospel unfolds, we see where the townspeople beg Jesus to leave as they didn't want any trouble from the authorities. Interesting. Here Jesus has clearly healed a man who had been so terribly possessed and was now set free; and yet, they wanted Jesus to leave. I have to ask myself, when and how do I "send Jesus away" in my own life because I don't want to be bothered? Do I resist the call from my Beloved out of some misguided fear or sense of having other priorities in my life?

At the end of this passage, we hear the man asking to come with Jesus. Jesus directs him to remain and tell his family about what the "Lord in his pity has done for you." How often do I share the wonder and workings of the Lord in my own life? Perhaps if we all shared the love we receive from God we would draw closer to the One we love and proclaim the Good News a bit more urgently and joyfully.



Cliffs of Moher, Ireland

Photo by Sister Jayne Helmlinger, CSJ

For Pondering

- How often do you send Jesus away in your own life?
- This possessed man had belief that Jesus could heal him. How strong is your belief? What might you say to God at this moment about your own belief in God's saving power?
- Place yourself in this scripture on the hill with Jesus, the man possessed, and the swine. What captures your imagination?

For Prayer

*O God,
you have the power to heal us in body, mind, and spirit.
May we turn to you and share with you
what in our own lives needs healing and forgiveness.
Let us continue to turn to you and one another
as we walk this journey of life together.*

Amen.

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