**Ordinary Time 4 B Lectionary Catechesis**

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 **Guardian Angels Parish in Mead, CO**

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| St. John Chrysostom compares Christ to Moses in the fulfillment of the roles of authority that Jesus has over the community like Moses. He is priest, prophet, and king. Each of these roles comes together in the incident in the synagogue today. Chrysostom also teaches the God accepts human testimony, and therefore promotes an evangelization that is the responsibility of every disciples to announce who Jesus is for themselves and for others. Jesus authority not only or merely drives out the evil one, but orients us to the covenant and commandment relationship we must have with the Father.  |

**FIRST READING: Deuteronomy 18, 15-20**

An origins story about prophets in the reading, the text is part of a larger speech of Moses about kings, priests, and prophets (17, 14 – 18, 22) which reflects a later historical period of either the Davidic dynasty or even later as a romanticization of the exile. It proposes a society governed by three elements, which later are transposed upon the messianic figure as embodiment of these three roles in one. Not in the reading, the prophet is first sharply contrasted to those who perform divinations and future telling. The person committed to the covenant trusts that God will take care of the future and not the human person.

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| **KNOW YOUR****FAITH** | Why does the Church condemn methods of divination such as numerology, palm reading, I-Ching, astrology, etc.? Are there prophets in the Church today? |
| **LIVE YOUR****FAITH** | The prophet speaks an authentic word of the Lord for the current and present time. How do you know that the word is actually from God?What does Moses do that is uniquely prophetic? |
| **SHARE YOUR FAITH** | The prophetic word is consistent with the commandments and covenant. Why does the community today need a prophetic voice?When you share your faith with others is it just your faith or in what way are your words consistent with the commandments and the covenant? |
| **WORSHIP** | Who are the Biblical prophets?How do the prophets aid us in worship? |

  **First Reading**

**RESPONSORIAL: Psalm 95, 1-2. 6-7. 7-9**

The first two verses here are surely a comment to encourage music and singing at Catholic liturgies and singing joyfully, crying out. Testing and trying God are the works of the soothsayers; they comfort us with their words of false expectation in making us feel good about ourselves. This is different from the “testing of spirits” commended by St. Paul. In contrast the person who bows down and kneels before God is the just person because of their sense of perspective and humility. The whole psalm is a part of the morning prayer of the Liturgy of the Hours. The missing verses celebrate God’s creation and ownership of all that is in the natural world.

**Vs. 7: CCC 1165** “Today” means not only this present moment but this moment as a decisive time of God’s actions. Above all this “day” right now, is always and forever our participation in the Passover of the Lord which gives light (meaning) to our humanity and orients us toward God.

**Vs. 9: CCC 2119** In the section on the First Commandment, the CCC describes the meaning and the effects of “tempting God.” It “wounds” the respect and trust we should have in God. It doubts God’s providential and covenant relationship with us.

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| **KNOW YOUR****FAITH** | What are the “works” which psalmist refers to in the last line that we have seen?Among the titles of ancient kings was “Shepherd.” How is God the shepherd of your life and our lives as a communion? |
| **LIVE YOUR****FAITH** | How does the notion of “Today!” impact your life?What happens to you when you kneel and bow during the Mass? |
| **SHARE YOUR FAITH** | How do we authentically invite others to come worship with us?Why is trust one of the most important features of any relationship? |
| **WORSHIP** | What is the state of communal singing joyfully in your parish and what would you have changed at the Eucharist?The Liturgy of the Eucharist employs ritual gestures of bowing and kneeling. This psalm validates that we should do so. Why do some people mean to eschew such gestures? |

 **Responsorial Psalm**

**SECOND READING: I Corinthians 7, 32-35**

Vs. 17 of this chapter is one of Paul’s core concepts. “Everyone should live as the Lord has assigned, just as called each one.” In other words each person’s state in life is just exactly where that person should be in order to live the fullest, abundant life has set out for each person. Then, with each person in exactly their authentic life role, the community as a whole is fulfilled, is just, and is ordered. The community the Church needs each person’s proper contribution of life to complete the Church. Hence there is marriage, consecrated life, societies of apostolic life, secular institutes, and ordination. Only the first and last are sacraments. Each one is an authentic response to God’s divine call to the person to have joy.

**Vs. 32: CCC 1579, 1618** Celibacy proclaims a waiting for the kingdom of God; they are “called to consecrate themselves with undivided heart to the Lord and to the affairs of the Lord.” “Christ is the center of all Christian life.” Virginity is bonded to Christ in its own unique way. They await the bridegroom to come who is Jesus Christ.

**Vss. 34-36: CCC 922** In the section describing the nature and constitution of the members of the Church, the CCC highlights here those who are virgins, assuming in this place that they are female.

**Vss. 34-35: CCC 506** Mary is a virgin as a sign of her unadulterated faith in God.

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| **KNOW YOUR****FAITH** | What is celibacy?Can men practice virginity? |
| **LIVE YOUR****FAITH** | The internet makes us a very worldly oriented society, and on top of that promotes a false sexual freedom in the massive pornographic content. What can the Church do to support lives of purity?What does it mean for you to be “anxious about the things of the Lord? |
| **SHARE YOUR FAITH** | How does freedom from anxiety allow us to be evangelizers of the gospel?How does your state of life share the gospel with others and call you to faithful discipleship? |
| **WORSHIP** | Celibacy is a way of openness to the future. Why would it be important or valuable for the Church to continue the requirement of celibacy for its clergy?Why is worship not only a spiritual but also a somatic practice necessarily? |

 **Second Reading**

**GOSPEL: Mark 1, 21-29 Jesus Teaches in the Synagogue and Drives out a Demon**

The exorcism incident in the synagogue is framed by the teaching authority of Jesus to preach the good news, the truth of God’s teachings. It is very easy to get caught up in the exorcism given our cultural fascination with evil. Would that we were as fascinated with the good! But the devil sells more movies. Even the devil professes acknowledgment of the identity of Jesus, something our cultural has an increasingly difficult time doing. This gospel might also be an opportunity to reflect on the sacrament of the sick, anointings, and related sacramentals. The larger context of the reading is that Jesus’ baptism inaugurates his mission on earth. It is the same with us.

**Vs. 21: 2173** Commenting on the holiness of the Sabbath, Jesus honors the Sabbath by inclusively making the Sabbath a day of mercy and compassion as truly pleasing to God.

**Vs. 24: CCC 438** Jesus’ anointing reveals his divine mission beginning with his baptism by John.

**Vs. 25: CCC 1673** This paragraph in the CCC defines exorcisms and that Jesus himself performed them. A simple or minor exorcism prayer is in the Baptism liturgy. A major exorcism requires the authorization of the bishop. Exorcism “is directed at the expulsion of demons or to the liberation from demonic possession,” and is distinguished from the work of the medical and psychological sciences.

**Vs. 26: CCC 1673** Cf. above.

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| **KNOW YOUR****FAITH** | What is the authority of Jesus?What is an exorcism? |
| **LIVE YOUR****FAITH** | What power and effect does Baptism have in your life today?Share your own experience of anointing of the sick if you have received that Sacrament? |
| **SHARE YOUR FAITH** | Why d the teachings of Jesus prompt astonishment and amazement?Are you spreading the fame of Jesus everywhere? Why or why not? |
| **WORSHIP** | Locate and read the minor exorcism prayer in the Sacrament of Baptism. In what way is the homily a teaching moment? Or is the homily a proclamation or a teaching?  |

 **Gospel**

**Next Sunday: Ordinary Time 5 B: Job 7, 1-4. 6-7; Ps 147; I Cor 9, 16-19. 22-23; Mk 1, 29-39**