

4th Sunday Ordinary Time Cycle B January 29, 2012
Deuteronomy 18:15-20 1Corinthians 7:32-35 Mark 1:21-28

“His fame spread everywhere throughout the whole region of Galilee.”

Jesus certainly wasn't searching for fame. And this would be the much truer definition of the word “fame;” becoming popular without seeking popularity. Living life for the good that will result in one's name being spread across the land. This would be the good fame, if you will. We know there's bad fame also.

This past Monday I was in Washington, DC to attend the March for Life. It never ceases to amaze me the sort of culture we abide in today. In these times. The March for Life is the only event that can occur in Washington, the nation's capital, where thousands and thousands of people can gather, march up the famous Constitution Avenue, walk past the Capitol Building where the laws of our land are created and changed, toward the Supreme Court where some laws that come out of the Capitol Building are determined to be constitutional or unconstitutional, thousands and thousands of Americans gathered as one, *and it doesn't make the nightly news.*

Put up a few tents somewhere, call yourselves occupiers, and the printed and visual news media is all over it! Fame is very deceptive.

There are times when those who are given coverage find what they seek. They want worldly fame, or, as Paul writes in this 2nd reading today, they are anxious about the things of the world, because the thought that life begins and ends in this world is the passion that drives them. That somehow this place of time and space is where the meaning of life is realized.

And there are those who don't receive the secular attention and coverage; are not influenced, disappointed, or halted in their beliefs by lack of coverage; and continue to March for Life because, not only is life a precious gift and sacred from the moment of creation. But also because the meaning of life is discovered in Jesus Christ, who sits at the right hand of the Father. (Can't wait to see what that looks like!). Meaning, our lives are in for a transformation. Thus, present popularity, if one arrives at that point, is secondary to our heavenly goal of life with Christ.

It's quite a contrast, is it not?

So the demon within the man in the synagogue, who thinks he owns this man's soul, speaks the following words to Jesus, “Have you come to destroy us?” The answer is, “Is the Pope Catholic? You bet your Super Bowl football I've come to destroy you! You bet your World Series ring and Stanley Cup trophy I've come to destroy you!”

Just like the March for Life where people march each year, and the numbers continue to grow, as well as the number of abortions in our country, and these folks march for the purpose of calling our nation to task and putting to rest the powerful demon of destroying human life in its earliest stages, so to has Jesus come to call to task the same demons who seek to destroy our humanity. Jesus does so with one having authority. The people of Jesus' time see firsthand where all authority rests.

The Gospel this week is a persuasive reminder that the corners and boundaries of this world cannot contain the human soul that searches for God. The same soul that desires to reside with God one day in the glory of heaven. This Gospel reminds us that we've been invaded by a certain spiritual element known as demons that came to be through their rejection of God. God didn't create the demonic. God created all good with

free will. And in their free will, some rejected the Source of all that is good.

Of all the evils we can experience in our lives, including death itself, we must hold on to the truth of all truths; that Jesus has overcome this world. That every evil and every demon is eventually subject to the power of the Creator, who is Love.

If we fail to live in this hope, and fail to allow our daily lives to express the joy that flows from Jesus destroying the unclean spirit held within the man standing in the synagogue, then we open ourselves to the fleeting fame of this world. The sort of fame that is possible to attain for all the wrong reasons. Beginning with the reason that this life we are presently living is the end all and be all. Therefore, capture as much of it as you possibly can. This is the individual right found in abortion. It's a failed form of fame because it results in death. To the body and the spirit.

But if we continue to choose each day to live in the hope of all hopes, that Jesus has overcome the world, then life is a March for Life. And if the nightly news chooses to avoid a life-giving cause, then who cares? Any fame that comes our way in the choice of Jesus overcoming the world is so far beyond all the cameras and news organizations put together times a thousand. The fame of life with Christ, both now and what's to come, is beyond measure, and priceless.