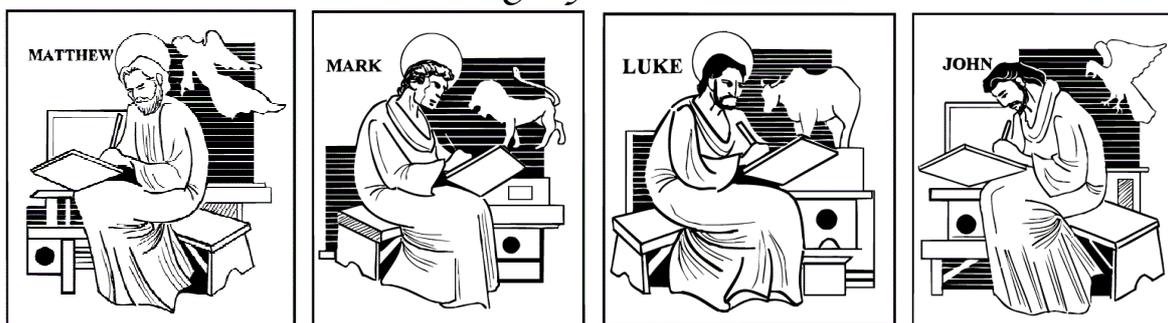


Breaking Open the Word



February 1, 2015 Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time Lectionary: 71 Gospel [Mk 1:21-28](#)

Then they came to Capernaum, and on the Sabbath Jesus entered the synagogue and taught. The people were astonished at his teaching, for he taught them as one having authority and not as the scribes. In their synagogue was a man with an unclean spirit; he cried out, "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!" Jesus rebuked him and said, "Quiet! Come out of him!" The unclean spirit convulsed him and with a loud cry came out of him. All were amazed and asked one another, "What is this? A new teaching with authority. He commands even the unclean spirits and they obey him." His fame spread everywhere throughout the whole region of Galilee.

Spiritual Reflection: Notice that the first place Jesus encounters someone possessed by a demon is not in the wilderness or along the streets but rather in a synagogue - a church. There is all so no description of the man who is possessed. The man could have been the choir leader, the rabbi, an elder, etc. The Good News is that he is healed. The moral of the story is that the Church is not a place to avoid because we have given into temptation but rather the place to go in order to receive God's love and mercy.

Spiritual Questions:

1. St. Augustine said "The Church is a hospital for sinners not a hotel for saints." What are your thoughts?
2. Who are some of the people at Church that inspire you?
3. Who are some of the people at Church that annoy you (don't mention by name)? Do you pray for them?
4. How can the Church help you find Christ's healing?
5. Why do you go to Church?