



The Holy See

POPE FRANCIS *ANGELUS* Saint Peter's Square

Sunday, 28 January 2018 [\[Multimedia\]](#)

Dear Brothers and Sisters, Good morning!

This Sunday's Gospel reading (cf. Mk 1:21-28) is part of a wider narrative called the "day in Capernaum". At the heart of today's reading is the event of the exorcism through which Jesus is presented as a *powerful prophet in word and deed*.

He enters the Synagogue of Capernaum on a Saturday and he begins teaching. The people are astonished by his *words* because they are not ordinary words. They do not sound like the ones they are accustomed to hearing. The Scribes in fact teach but without any authority. And Jesus teaches with authority. Jesus instead teaches like one who has authority, thus revealing himself as God's Emissary, and not a simple man who has to base his teaching solely on earlier traditions. Jesus has full authority. His doctrine is new and the Gospel says that the people commented: "a new teaching! With authority" (v. 27).

At the same time, Jesus reveals himself to be powerful also in *deeds*. In the Synagogue of Capernaum, there is a man who is possessed by an unclean spirit which manifests itself by shouting these words: "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" (24). The devil tells the truth: Jesus came to destroy the devil, to ruin the demon, to defeat him. This unclean spirit knows the power of God and he also proclaims his holiness. Jesus rebukes him saying: "Be silent, and come out of him!" (v. 25). These few words from Jesus are enough to obtain victory over Satan, who comes out of that man "convulsing him and crying out in a loud voice", the Gospel says (v. 26).

This makes a strong impression on those present. Everyone is overcome by fear and asks themselves: "What is this? [...] he commands even the unclean spirits and they obey him". (v. 27). The power of Jesus confirms the authority of his teaching. He does not just speak with words, but he takes action. In this way, he manifests God's plan with words and with the power of his deeds. In the Gospel in fact, we see that in his earthly mission, Jesus reveals the love of God both

through preaching and through countless gestures of attention and aid to the sick, the needy, children and sinners.

Jesus is our Teacher, powerful in word and deed. Jesus imparts to us all the light that illuminates the sometimes dark paths of our lives. He also transmits to us the necessary strength to overcome difficulties, trials and temptations. Let us consider what a great grace it is for us to have known this God who is so powerful and so good! A teacher and a friend who shows us the path and takes care of us especially when we are in need.

May the Virgin Mary, the woman of listening, help us to create silence around us and within us, in order to hear, through the din of the messages of the world, the most authoritative word that there is: that of her Son Jesus who proclaims the meaning of our existence and delivers us from all slavery, even that of the Evil one.

After the Angelus:

Dear brothers and sisters, yesterday, we received the distressing news from Afghanistan of the terrible terrorist attack which left over 100 dead and many injured in the capital Kabul. A few days ago, also in Kabul, another serious attack had spread terror and death in a large hotel. How long will the Afghan people have to endure this inhuman violence? Let us pray in silence for all the victims and for their families; and let us pray for those in that nation who continue to work to build peace.

Today we commemorate World Leprosy Day. Unfortunately this illness still continues to strike, especially the neediest and the poorest of persons. We assure our closeness and solidarity to these brothers and sisters and we also pray for those who assist them and work for their reintegration into society.

I greet families, parishes, associations and all those who have come from Italy and from many parts of the world; in particular the students from Badajoz, Spain, the faithful from Ljubljana, Slovenia, and those from Venice and Veglie, Italy.

I greet with great affection the young people from Catholic Action of the Diocese of Rome! I hope that even by making noise, you will be able to do good work, right? Dear young people, accompanied by the Vicar Archbishop, by your parents and teachers and by the assisting priests, this year too, you have come in large numbers to conclude the "Caravan of Peace". I thank you for this initiative. Thank you, Thank you very much! Do not tire of being instruments of peace and joy among your peers! Let us all now listen to the message that your friends beside me are about to read to us.

[The message was read aloud by a boy and girl beside him. The Holy Father then said to them:]

Thank you, thank you. Stay here. Say hello, say hello, say hello without fear!

And now, together with our prayers for peace, each of us in his or her own heart, pray for peace. Together with these prayers, balloons will rise up to heaven!

[After balloons were released, Pope Francis concluded:]

Have you seen these balloons? When we do not pray well, when we live a life which is not the life that Jesus wants, our prayers do not float up, and we need help to make them go aloft. When you feel that your prayers do not rise, seek someone's help.

I wish you all a Happy Sunday. Please do not forget to pray for me. Enjoy your lunch! *Arrivederci!*