

Early Summer - Cycle C - Revised Common Lectionary
Pentecost through Proper 10
May 27, 2007 - July 15, 2007

We remain Easter people, now with the wind of the Holy Spirit in our sails. Our task for the months ahead, in this season of Ordinary Time, which extends to the end of November, is to look at what Jesus so tenaciously taught his disciples and see what is in these teachings for us, as we carry out the work we have been given to do. Jesus promised his disciples a helper, an Advocate, who would stand with them making the work possible. This same helper, the Holy Spirit, hovers over us, still eager to quench the fire of fear and replace it with the powerful energy of love.

Proper 7
June 24, 2007
Luke 8: 26-39

A notation for this week's Gospel

Demons. Not a likely topic for a meeting of psychiatric medical professionals. And the prescription — tossing demons onto the back of pigs and subsequently driving the pigs off a cliff — equally unlikely. Yet who among us has not been taunted by a demon in some other disguise? ("I am not qualified, I can't do it, it is too hard." etc.) And, oh, the delicious relief when the wind blows the demons away.

Lesson Plans for Adults

Theme: Demons blown away.

Before Class. You will need Bibles, pieces of paper, pencils or pens, and inexpensive envelopes that can be sealed.

Beginning. Tell the class that demons are our subject today. We are not qualified to serve as psychiatric counselors, and serious psychological problems deserve competent treatment. Invite the group to share "demons" we are capable of grappling with and helping each other as we free ourselves from their grip. Ask the group to take a few moments thinking about the "demons" that sneak up on us and rob us of our self-confidence — our conviction that we are children of God. Encourage them to make the distinction between things we can do nothing about (poor eyesight, for example) and those things that are mostly figments of our poor self-respect (they wouldn't want my help, etc.). Ask them to write on scraps of paper "demons" that show up. What they write will be for their eyes only, to be shared only if they choose to do so.

Opening Prayer. Dear God, thank you that you want us to be free of the demons that bind us, free to serve you and to live our lives in love and in peace. Amen.

The Scripture. **Luke 8: 26 - 39.** Invite three readers: The narrator has most of the lines; "Legion", the demons have verses 28b and 30 b; and Jesus has verses 30b and 39b.

Some Questions.

Describe the situation of the "man" in this passage. (Verses 27, 29b)

Describe what the demons request of Jesus (verse 31) and Jesus solution (verse 32-33).

Discuss: Since, surely, Jesus does not expect us to inflict our demons on herds of swine and drive them over a cliff, what could Jesus be telling us to do with the demons that torment us?

What can we do to rid ourselves of the lies that bind us?

Getting Closure. Invite the group to sit in a circle. Give each person an envelope in which they can seal their piece of paper with the "demon" described. Invite each person to consider giving the demon back to Jesus. Allow a moment or two of silent prayer for people to do just that. Then invite them to take the envelope home, dispose of in an appropriate manner (toss it in a camp fire, run it through a paper shredder, or simply toss it in the trash). Then, if the demon tries to show up again, remind the demon that you have already dealt with it and it needs to go away and leave you alone.

Closing Prayer. Dear Jesus, we thank you that you want us to be free of demons that drag us down and we trust you will take and drive away these demons we have offered to you. Amen.