

Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time

January 30/31, 2021

In the early 1900s there was a scripture study called the Messianic Secret. In his Gospel, Mark wrote to portray the disciples and apostles as failing to see Jesus as the Son of God. Those who did recognize Jesus were the foreigners and Gentiles: For example, the Roman Soldier at the foot of the Cross, and the Demons like those we encounter in today's Gospel. We hear the unclean spirits announcing his authority saying: "I know who you are--- the Holy One of God". The onlookers were amazed when they heard this. They shouted: "This is a new teaching, one with authority". I would imagine that this announcement caused confusion among the listeners. How is it that the Apostles and disciples are not recognizing Jesus as the Messiah, but the Gentiles and unclean know who Jesus really is.

The teachings of Jesus exhibit authority, for he is the source of his preaching. His authority comes from the depths of his very being. His is a new teaching, one that introduces the listener to the realm of inclusion, where the Kingdom of God, is a kingdom of mercy and peace and healing. It is not a matter of burdening laws which set divisions. In this new realm it will be a kingdom where God draws us all together. In this kingdom there is ONE body. It is an invitation to all of us to come to the table, to sit beside each other where all are welcome. God is the One who rules FROM THE HEART.