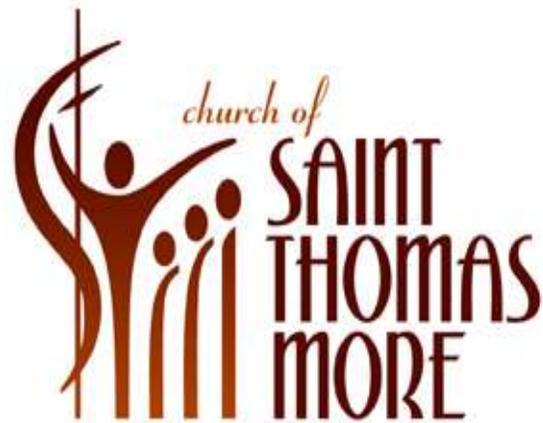


Cycle C – the Year of Mark

The weeks after Christmas and Epiphany mark the first of our Ordinary Time seasons for the Church year. Ordinary Time is named for **ordained** or **ordered** time, not ordinary in the sense of “not special.” I know it’s strange, but we begin with the Second Sunday in Ordinary Time, the First generally being the Baptism of the Lord.



Ordinary Time in Cycle C features the Gospel of Mark. Mark’s Gospel was the first of the four collected in our Bible to be written, the earliest of the accounts of Jesus’ life and teaching.

As our Liturgy Committee discussed the weeks leading up to the season of Lent, we reflected on the Gospels that will be proclaimed and came away with the feeling that these passages, when viewed as a group, seem to address the question: “Who Is Jesus?”

Early on in Mark’s Gospel, Jesus asks “What are you looking for?” Even though it is asked of two early disciples, it is a question each of us must answer. Their initial answer is another question that tries to figure Jesus out: “where are you staying?” Jesus then invites the two to “come, and you will see.” One of the two later invites a third, his brother Peter.

Over the weeks, we’ll notice a growing number of people following Jesus, coming to him for healing, listening to his teachings, trying to figure him out. In week 3, he calls more disciples, and in week 4, we hear that “his fame spread everywhere.” In week 6, a leper healed by Jesus “spread the report abroad so it was impossible for Jesus to enter a town openly.” By the 7th week, the Gospel tells us there are so many people gathered around Jesus, there is no more room in the house and people had to lower a paralyzed man from the roof to get him to Jesus!

The Good News spreads; more and more people are talking about Jesus, even when he tells them not to! Each of them is telling others about Jesus, answering for themselves the question, “Who is Jesus?”

That question is not just for those who heard him 2000 years ago to ponder, but for us to consider today. We each have to come to know who Jesus is for ourselves and not who someone else says he is.

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