

## MEDITATION 29

Mark 3: 20-21

<sup>20</sup> Then Jesus went home, and the crowd came together again, so that they could not even eat. <sup>21</sup> When his family heard it, they went out to restrain him, for people were saying, "He has gone out of his mind."

What is happening with Jesus? He is a gifted healer and exorcist. People with all kinds of mental health conditions within an impoverished, desperate and trauma-filled environment are surrounding his family home seeking help. Jesus is engaging. It must be intense. Jesus must be acting out the intensity in some way. What does he do physically and vocally to heal the sick? Clearly, some people are astonished if not alarmed. As we will see (next meditation), this is the case for the authorities who want to find any pretext to condemn Jesus as possessed by the devil to explain his behaviour.

But right now, we think of Jesus' family. Clearly, they care about Jesus. He is the eldest brother and eldest son. But he seems alienated from his family and he's doing his own thing. They want to protect him. From whom? Is it protection from the authorities, from the crowds, from himself? Or is it also protecting themselves from what they cannot understand about him and therefore fear?

They go outside the house to "restrain" Jesus because people are saying, "He has gone out of his mind."

Have you ever felt afraid of what was strange and unfamiliar?...

Have you ever felt misunderstood by those around you and your family?...

Have you ever felt misaligned with your family, with the people around you, with society, or with yourself?....

Have you ever feared for someone's mental health who is a family member, a friend or colleague?...

Have you tried to help in some way but this has backfired onto you or not worked out as you would have hoped and prayed?...

Each one of these questions are big questions and require some time and reflection to process... I expect everyone of us can answer yes to at least one of these questions... Take a few moments now to reflect on the above questions again... isolate the one or ones that are really relevant to your experience in some way at some point in your life...

PRAYER: Help me, O God... Help me when I come face to face with something I do not understand and fear... Help me when this is something in myself... Or maybe it's in someone close to me who is struggling or unravelling in some way... Or maybe it's because the situation

is requiring me to open up to something or change something in myself or the situation... To change, O God, it also means I have to let go of something. I have to take a step into something... I am vulnerable... There is risk... There is fear...

What do you want of me right now, O God?... What is good for me right now, O God?... Where have I yet to go maybe I need to go?... Where do I need to find my peace in looking at the situation, at myself or at someone else in a new way?... Give me the courage I need, O God... Give me the grace... And give me the assurance and the peace... Help me surrender to your love...

In Jesus' name... Amen.