



*Come, Thou Holy Spirit, come!  
And from Thy celestial home  
Shed a ray of light divine!*

## HOMILY – 10TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME - YEAR B

Based on St Mark 3: 20-35 | By Rt Rev'd Dr Geoffrey S Robinson CJ

<sup>20</sup> Then he went home, and the crowd gathered again, so that they could not even eat. <sup>21</sup> And when his family heard it, they went out to seize him, for they were saying, “He is out of his mind.”

### Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit

<sup>22</sup> And the scribes who came down from Jerusalem were saying, “He is possessed by Beelzebul,” and “by the prince of demons he casts out the demons.” <sup>23</sup> And he called them to him and said to them in parables, “How can Satan cast out Satan? <sup>24</sup> If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. <sup>25</sup> And if a house is divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand. <sup>26</sup> And if Satan has risen up against himself and is divided, he cannot stand, but is coming to an end. <sup>27</sup> But no one can enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man. Then indeed he may plunder his house.

<sup>28</sup> “Truly, I say to you, all sins will be forgiven the children of man, and whatever blasphemies they utter, <sup>29</sup> but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin” — <sup>30</sup> for they were saying, “He has an unclean spirit.”

### Jesus' Mother and Brothers

<sup>31</sup> And his mother and his brothers came, and standing outside they sent to him and called him. <sup>32</sup> And a crowd was sitting around him, and they said to him, “Your mother and your brothers<sup>[a]</sup> are outside, seeking you.” <sup>33</sup> And he answered them, “Who are my mother and my brothers?” <sup>34</sup> And looking about at those who sat around him, he said, “Here are my mother and my brothers! <sup>35</sup> For whoever does the will of God, he is my brother and sister and mother.”



May I speak in the Name of God; who is,  
+Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen.

Over my lifetime I have known people  
who have been attracted to the idea of

living a simple life. I'm sure you know what I mean, people who feel that life is better when it is uncluttered by lots of possessions. Even though they've got good jobs and make enough money to live well, yet they prefer to live in a modest house, don't own a car, and buy their clothes from Charity shops. People who know them, often can't understand this and ask if these attitudes are something to do with their religion?"

Well today, Saint Mark tells us that these type of people aren't alone, because people have always had a hard time understanding Jesus' earthly ways of life which did reflect some of these similarities.

We heard in today's gospel story about Jesus who had returned home, and was then immediately swamped by a crowd of people. Reading between the lines, they were probably looking for healing, and at least some of them appear to have had unclean spirits in them. When Jesus' family heard about all the things he was doing, they immediately decide that it was time to give him a good talking-to. Saint Mark tells us that they went out to restrain him, for people were openly saying that He had gone out of his mind.

Then we heard another story about some of the scribes who accused Jesus of being worse than crazy. They were actually saying, that the reason that Jesus could drive out evil spirits was because He had joined forces with Satan. But Jesus was having none of that, and replied forcefully to the accusation. Jesus was in fact, waging war against all Satan's evil forces and emphasised this by issuing them with a stern warning

when He said - that no one should ever blaspheme against the Holy Spirit.

What Jesus wants us all to see is that when we are spiritually blind; we have probably lost the ability to admit that we're wrong and don't feel it necessary even to ask for forgiveness! Have you ever met people who persistently lie and cheat, or even those who continually turn their backs on Biblical moral and sexual teachings?

We all need to take great care, because there are some religious groups today who not only fall into these categories, but who also actively condone such bad behaviour. There really is no doubt in my mind that these sort of persistent evil deeds and wrongdoings, was why Jesus himself issued that warning - "Whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit can never be forgiven." Now of course, God always wants to forgive. But the fact is, and we don't have to look far to see it, that many people have wilfully closed themselves off to that possibility by continually enjoying the self-satisfaction of their immoral and foolish ways.

Then we hear that Jesus came back to his earlier teachings when his mother and brothers arrived; the house was so full of people in need of help that they had to send in a messenger to talk to Jesus. "Your mother, your brothers and your sisters are outside, asking for you"

Then, Jesus gave a startling reply. He looked around at the crowd and said "Who are my mother and brothers? - -  
Whoever does the will of God is my brother, my sister and my mother".

We heard the Scribes and Pharisees saying that Jesus should stop working with the devil. Even his family were concerned that Jesus was crazy and wanted him to come home with them to get well again. They wanted Jesus to return to being the nice, inoffensive religious man that he used to be. What an illustration of misunderstanding of what Jesus was really trying to say to people who failed to understand what He really meant.

But in all this, let us never forget what Saint Paul taught, that “*Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and for ever*” – God’s spirit whose being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth are infinite, eternal, and unchangeable.

Even tax collectors, prostitutes, and many people who worked for the Romans, all believed this about Jesus and became his family of followers.

We too then should be faithful to Biblical teachings and remain united in a deep desire to follow what Jesus said that day - “*Whoever does the will of God is my brother and sister and mother*”

That sounds like the sort of family I want to be part of.

How about you!

**Amen.**