

**SHARING THE FAITH: WEEKLY EMAIL DEVOTION
FOR THE WEEK ENDING JUNE 20, 2010**

Readings for June 20, 2010, Fourth Sunday after Pentecost:

LUKE 8:26-39

²⁶Then they arrived at the country of the Gerasenes, which is opposite Galilee. ²⁷As he stepped out on land, a man of the city who had demons met him. For a long time he had worn no clothes, and he did not live in a house but in the tombs. ²⁸When he saw Jesus, he fell down before him and shouted at the top of his voice, "What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg you, do not torment me" — ²⁹for Jesus had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. (For many times it had seized him; he was kept under guard and bound with chains and shackles, but he would break the bonds and be driven by the demon into the wilds.) ³⁰Jesus then asked him, "What is your name?" He said, "Legion"; for many demons had entered him. ³¹They begged him not to order them to go back into the abyss.

³²Now there on the hillside a large herd of swine was feeding; and the demons begged Jesus to let them enter these. So he gave them permission. ³³Then the demons came out of the man and entered the swine, and the herd rushed down the steep bank into the lake and was drowned.

³⁴When the swineherds saw what had happened, they ran off and told it in the city and in the country. ³⁵Then people came out to see what had happened, and when they came to Jesus, they found the man from whom the demons had gone sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in his right mind. And they were afraid. ³⁶Those who had seen it told them how the one who had been possessed by demons had been healed. ³⁷Then all the people of the surrounding country of the Gerasenes asked Jesus to leave them; for they were seized with great fear. So he got into the boat and returned. ³⁸The man from whom the demons had gone begged that he might be with him; but Jesus sent him away, saying, ³⁹Return to your home, and declare how much God has done for you. So he went away, proclaiming throughout the city how much Jesus had done for him.

Faith Questions:

1. Even though the demons leaving him would mean that the man would be healed, healing was a pretty scary prospect for this individual. The man tells Jesus in verse 28 to leave him alone and not to heal him! Have you ever had this experience of being afraid of change that was for the better? Do you know someone who feels like this? What do you think makes people afraid of change, even if it will be better for them in the long run?
2. The man who Jesus heals is not a Jew, but a Gentile. What do you think this action might say about Jesus' mission in the world? Who is Jesus' message for?
3. After the man was healed, he didn't want to go back to his village. Why do you think that might be?

4. The man wanted to go with Jesus after his healing, but instead, Jesus sent him home to proclaim the news of what had happened to him there. Why do you think Jesus sent him home? Is this man's call to stay in his hometown and proclaim what God had done similar to God's call in your life? In what way?
5. How has Jesus healed/changed/saved you, even when you may not have wanted or expected it? How is God calling you to share that story with others?

Let us pray:

O healing God, sometimes we fear being made whole. It is scary to change, even when it might be what is best. Save us from our fear, and heal us in all of the ways you know we need healing. Help us to share our own stories of your healing presence in our lives with others, wherever we may be.

For whom else, and for what else, shall we pray? (Insert your own prayer here)
Amen.

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