

Connecting With the Sunday Readings

Tenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

This Gospel tells us something about Mark's audience. The early Christians were misunderstood, persecuted and even killed. For the Markan community especially, their commitment to their faith was stronger than family relationships. Many left their families to join Jesus and his followers. Their family members saw this new religion as strange and may have looked down on Christians. This passage offers Jesus as the ultimate example of one who is misunderstood by his family. Jesus' family thinks that he is out of his mind.

A Gospel Word for the Home

Mark 3:20-35

A common theme in Mark's Gospel is how Jesus' followers fail to understand the meaning of his words and actions. In this reading, Jesus is misunderstood and challenged by both religious leaders and his own family members. The scribes accuse Jesus of being possessed by the devil. His family apologizes for his craziness and tries to bring him home before people start talking about them as well. Despite multiple confrontations, Jesus remains true to himself and to God as he counters each attack with parables. Jesus explains that he is not fighting on behalf of evil and explains, "if a house is divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand."

Thought for the Week

Today's Gospel is a stark reminder that Jesus did not have it easy. Even his own mother and siblings did not understand him. Jesus was not misunderstood because of self-righteous behavior, acting as though he was better than everyone else. He was misunderstood because he enjoyed the company of sinners. He ate with tax collectors. He reached out to the outcasts. His behavior embarrassed his family and offended religious leaders. As followers of Jesus are we willing to act as he did? Even when we are challenged?

Parent Survival

Misunderstandings are at the root of many painful family experiences. In this Gospel, Jesus is so misunderstood that his family thinks he is crazy. That's why uninterrupted, quality family time is so important. We need to continually get to know one another and share our gifts, dreams, heartaches and worries. We need to know that we can count on one another and we need to speak to one another of our unconditional love for each other. Most importantly, we need to demonstrate that love for each other in our actions.

What are you doing to carve out quality family time each week? Nothing is more important to the social, emotional, and spiritual development of our children than family time. Making family time may mean that cutting out other activities is necessary. Are we scheduling our time and energy where our priorities are?

Car or Meal Talk

Share about a time when you had the courage to stand up for your faith even when challenged by others.

One-Line Prayer

Jesus, give me the courage to follow your example even when I am challenged.
Amen.