

# THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MARK

## *Introduction*

*The theme of the gospel of Mark is the person of Jesus more than his teaching: the mystery of Jesus, the mysterious Jesus. A perspective that dims out leading to a dramatic confrontation. Jesus teaches but his followers do not understand him. Jesus is the Messiah that has to suffer. By the time of the final triumph, Mark is again bare: the confession of the centurion contrasting with the fearful silence of the women.*

*It seems that Mark writes for a pagan or mixed community; probably a poor and persecuted community. A very old tradition asserts that Mark writes his gospel in Rome, putting in writing the preaching of Peter.*

*Mark invites for an easy, superficial reading, but the challenge is to read Mark in depth.*

**1** <sup>21</sup>They went into the town of Capernaum and Jesus began to teach in the synagogue during the sabbath assemblies. <sup>22</sup>The people were astonished at the way he taught, for he spoke as one having authority and not like the teachers of the Law.

<sup>23</sup>It happened that a man with an evil spirit was in their synagogue <sup>24</sup>and he shouted:

—What do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are: You are the Holy One of God.

<sup>25</sup>Then Jesus faced him and said with authority:

—Be silent and come out of this man!

<sup>26</sup>The evil spirit shook the man violently and, with a loud shriek, came out of him.

<sup>27</sup>All the people were astonished and they wondered: ‘What is this? With what authority he preaches! He even orders evil spirits and they obey him!’ <sup>28</sup>And Jesus’ fame spread throughout all the country of Galilee.

## Healings

<sup>29</sup>On leaving the synagogue, Jesus went to the home of Simon and Andrew with James and John. <sup>30</sup>As Simon’s mother-in-law was sick in bed with fever, they immediately told him about her. <sup>31</sup>Jesus went to her and taking her by the hand, raised her up. The fever left her and she began to wait on them.

## Election of the Twelve

**3** <sup>13</sup>Then Jesus went up into the hill country and called those he wanted and they came to him. <sup>14</sup>So he appointed twelve to be with him; and he called them apostles. He wanted to send them out to preach, <sup>15</sup>and he gave them authority to drive out demons.

<sup>16</sup>These are the Twelve: Simon, to whom he gave the name Peter; <sup>17</sup>James, son of Zebedee, and John his brother, to whom he gave the name Boanerges, which means ‘men of thunder;’

<sup>18</sup>Andrew, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James son of Alpheus, Thaddeus, Simon the Cananean <sup>19</sup>and Judas Iscariot, the one who betrayed him.

### **In the synagogue of Nazareth**

**6** <sup>1</sup>Leaving that place, Jesus returned to his own country, and his disciples followed him. <sup>2</sup>When the Sabbath came, he began teaching in the synagogue, and most of those who heard him were astonished. They commented:

—How did this come to him? What kind of wisdom has been given to him that he also performs such miracles? <sup>3</sup>Who is he but the carpenter, the son of Mary and the brother of James and Joset and Judas and Simon? His sisters, too, are they not here among us?

So they took offense at him.

<sup>4</sup>And Jesus said to them:

—Prophets are despised only in their own country, among their relatives and in their own family.

<sup>5</sup>And he could work no miracles there, but only healed a few sick people by laying his hands on them. <sup>6</sup>Jesus himself was astounded at their unbelief. Jesus then went around the villages teaching.

### **Against ambition**

**10** <sup>35</sup>James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to Jesus and said to him:

—Master, we want you to grant us what we are going to ask of you.

<sup>36</sup>And he said:

—What do you want me to do for you?

<sup>37</sup>They answered:

—Grant us to sit one at your right and one at your left when you come in your glory.

<sup>38</sup>But Jesus said to them:

—You don't know what you are asking. Can you drink the cup that I drink or be baptized in the way I am baptized? <sup>39</sup>They answered:

—We can.

And Jesus told them:

—The cup that I drink you will drink, and you will be baptized in the way I am baptized.

<sup>40</sup>But to sit at my right or at my left is not mine to grant. It has been prepared for others.

<sup>41</sup>On hearing this, the other ten were angry with James and John; <sup>42</sup>Jesus then called them to him and said:

—As you know, the so-called rulers of the nations act as tyrants and their great ones oppress them. <sup>43</sup>But it shall not be so among you; whoever would be great among you must be your servant, <sup>44</sup>and whoever would be first among you shall make himself slave of all. <sup>45</sup>Think of the Son of Man who has not come to be served but to serve and to give his life to redeem many.

### **The widow's offering**

**12**<sup>41</sup>Jesus sat down opposite the Temple treasury and watched the people dropping money into the treasury box; and many rich people put in large offerings. <sup>42</sup>But a poor widow also came and dropped in two small coins.

<sup>43</sup>Then Jesus called his disciples and said to them:

—Truly I say to you, this poor widow put in more than all those who gave offerings. <sup>44</sup>For all of them gave from their plenty, but she gave from her poverty and put in everything she had, her very living.