

Commentary on the Gospel for Tue, Aug 30th 2011

JESUS begins preaching publicly in the synagogues and is confronted by a man who is possessed by an evil spirit—the traditional way of describing someone who was often not in control of their bodily functions (spasms, epilepsy, mental illness, etc. and in the same sense we'd talk about people addicted to drugs, alcohol, etc.) It seems those who are most damaged as human beings see clearly who Jesus is and he has power over all their ills and lacks. He commands with his word that the man be whole, so that the man can live without harm to himself or others. This is the work of Jesus: to preach the good news to the poor, to heal and restore people to their

dignity and life as children of God, to teach with authority and to have power over everything in heaven and on earth. It begins in the synagogue and will spread out into the world. We have been restored to our dignity as children in our baptisms; now we are to share that holiness with others outside of our churches.

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