

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO SAINT MARK

The Preaching of John the Baptist

The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.^a

2 As it is written in Isaiah the prophet,^b

“Behold, I send my messenger before your face, who shall prepare your way;

³ the voice of one crying in the wilderness:

Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight—”

⁴John the Baptist appeared ^c in the wilderness, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ⁵And there went out to him all the country of Judea, and all the people of Jerusalem;

and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. ⁶Now John was clothed with camel's hair, and had a leather belt around his waist, and ate locusts and wild honey. ⁷And he preached, saying, “After me comes he who is mightier than I, the thong of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. ⁸I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”

We hear from one of the four Gospels at every Mass. For the Sunday readings, the Church has a three-year cycle. We are currently in year B and hear mostly from the Gospel of Mark.

Last month at Pint with a Priest we talked about Mark's Gospel, what we know of the author, the historical events that may have influenced what he included, and who he was writing to. Here are a few points...

Scholars tells us that The Gospel of Mark was written in Greek around the late 60s A.D., for a gentile audience, and probably in the city of Rome. Rome was not an easy place to be a Christian, especially during Emperor Nero's persecutions from 54 until 68 A.D.

The earliest traditions tells us that Mark was a disciple of St. Peter and wrote down Peter's recollections of Jesus. Mark is much harder on

Peter than the others. It seems Peter wanted to share his weakness and glorify Jesus.

Mark is the shortest and most action-packed gospel. The story starts quickly as John the Baptist preaches in the wilderness. Jesus comes to be baptized and the heavens are ripped open at the sound of the Father's voice. Mark takes us from scene to scene rapidly (he uses the word “immediately” 35 times).

The story line of Mark begins on the banks of the River Jordan in the wilderness, moves into Galilee then across the Jordan to Jericho and then up to Jerusalem, where Jesus' identity is fully revealed as Messiah, Suffering Servant and Eucharistic Lord.

Mark emphasizes discipleship, and seems to end his Gospel with the empty tomb, leaving it to his readers to decide how they will respond.



One of the earliest known fragments of the Gospel of Mark from around 200 A.D. It is known as P137. It was discovered in 1903 when archaeologists excavated an ancient Egyptian rubbish dump containing thousands of papyrus fragments. It was only recently identified and published.

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MARK
 "THE BEGINNING OF THE GOOD NEWS ABOUT JESUS THE MESSIAH, THE SON OF GOD."

ACT 1: GALILEE
 1-8a WHO IS JESUS?
 BEHOLD, I WILL SEND MY MESSENGER BEFORE YOU... TO PREPARE THE WAY OF THE LORD.
 YOU ARE MY BELOVED SON.
 GOD'S RESCUE OPERATION FOR THE WORLD.
 INVITATION TO LIVE UNDER GOD'S REIGN BY FOLLOWING JESUS.
 JOHN THE BAPTIST.
 JESUS BRINGS GOD'S KINGDOM.
 BE HEALED!
 YOUR SINS ARE FORGIVEN.
 WE'LL FOLLOW YOU!
 WHERE DID HE GET THIS WISDOM?
 ONLY GOD CAN FORGIVE SINS!
 YOUR POWER COMES FROM THE DEVIL!
 AND GETS DIVERSE RESPONSES.
 PARABLES ABOUT THE MYSTERY OF GOD'S KINGDOM.
 THE FOUR SOILS.
 THE MUSTARD SEED.
 JESUS IS THE MESSIAH, BUT NOT THE KIND PEOPLE EXPECTED.
 WHAT DO THESE PARABLES MEAN?
 WHO IS HE REALLY?

ACT 2: "ON THE WAY"
 8b-10 WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR JESUS TO BE THE MESSIAH?
 CONVERSATION #1 (8:27-38)
 SUFFERING SERVANT ISAIAH 53.
 WHO DO YOU SAY I AM?
 YOU'RE THE MESSIAH!
 VICTORIOUS KING! DEFEAT ROMANS.
 FOLLOWING JESUS:
 - IS LIKE KING
 - MEANS REJECTING VIOLENCE & TRIBE
 - ACTS OF SERVICE & LOVE
 CONVERSATION #2 (9:30-37)
 THE SON OF MAN DID NOT COME TO BE SERVED, BUT TO BECOME A SERVANT & GIVE HIS LIFE AS A RANSOM FOR MANY.
 CONVERSATION #3 (10:32-45)
 THIS IS MY BELOVED SON.
 JUST LIKE... GOD'S GLORY? & THE TWO PROPHETS WHO MET GOD ON MT. SINAI.
 MOSES (EXODUS 33) ELIJAH (1 KINGS 19)
 JESUS' EMBODIMENT OF GOD'S GLORY.
 THE GLORIOUS GOD SUFFERING AND DYING FOR HIS PEOPLE.

ACT 3: JERUSALEM
 11-16 HOW JESUS BECOMES KING
 SAVE US, SON OF DAVID!
 JESUS' ROYAL ENTRY.
 YOU'VE TURNED MY HOUSE INTO A DEN OF THIEVES!
 JESUS ASSERTS HIS AUTHORITY OVER THE TEMPLE.
 WHAT AUTHORITY DO YOU HAVE?! LET'S KILL HIM!
 JESUS CONDEMNS ISRAEL'S LEADERS.
 PREDICTION OF JERUSALEM'S DOWNFALL.
 THE CITY & TEMPLE WILL BE DESTROYED WITHIN A GENERATION.
 THE DISCIPLES WILL BE PERSECUTED.
 JESUS WILL ONE DAY RETURN.
 THE LAST SUPPER.
 OLD MEANING: LIBERATION FROM SLAVERY THROUGH DEATH OF PASSOVER GOATS.
 NEW MEANING: LIBERATION FROM SIN & DEATH THROUGH THE DEATH OF THE MESSIAH.
 DARKNESS.
 THIS MAN WAS THE SON OF GOD!
 FIRST PERSON IN THE STORY TO GRASP JESUS' IDENTITY.
 THE CRUCIFIED SON OF GOD IS THE MESSIAH!
 JESUS ISN'T HERE! HE'S RISEN FROM THE DEAD & WILL MEET YOU UP IN GALILEE!
 "THEY FLED FROM THE TOMB IN TERROR, TELLING NO ONE, FOR THEY WERE AFRAID..."