

## Reflection from Fr. Colm on Wednesday of week 13 in Ordinary Time

*Audio posted to the Parish Website on Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> July 2020*

Good morning all, I hope you're okay. The Gospel story today is that marvellous healing of the two demoniacs by Jesus. The story itself has a curious backdrop in that the location, they're called Gadarenes but Gadara was a place untouched and indeed certainly not frequented by Jews it was considered unclean, add to this the pig bit and the history of the Jewish attitude towards pork and we have a second unclean dimension to it. There are a few others, of course, the demoniacs were considered unclean so they were in tombs the only place that they could find to live.

Tombs, of course, were horribly unclean places for Jews even to touch a tomb accidentally meant that you were unclean so there were lots of areas, I mean it's in fact, it's a most unclean story, it's a very negative story and what's fascinating here is that Jesus rearranges everything. The unclean demons go into the unclean pigs and the unclean pigs go into the water and for the Jew, the water was that place, Leviathan, that place of danger, deadly, uncontrollable danger. And that's why we have other instances in the Gospel of Jesus overcoming water and walking on water, it's just as an indication of His power over the darkness of life.

These two unfortunates of course are healed of and they're restored to society. However, the sad part of the story is that Jesus is asked to leave the territory, they ask Him to go away. Now I find this very interesting in the context of where we are and how we're living now with COVID and hopefully please God we're coming out of this. Do we want things the way they were? That's the big question that's being asked. *"Oh, they're all going to go back to the way they were."* Well, are they?

Certainly, means of communication are going to change dramatically but you know that's I suppose that's a new discovery that we have found in relation to Zoom and Teams, etc but there are other changes that are more fundamental and more profound that need to take place. Will our churches be changed? Our understanding of church be changed. No bad thing perhaps if it is. Understanding of life, understanding of politics,

understanding of our values will all of that be changed, or do we want to go back to the way we were?

So, it is a story, it's a story for today. Are we going to allow the spirit of Christ, which I hope that we have rediscovered to a different and more profound level in this time of lockdown and that we will move forward with a sense of hope and healing and renewal? Just a reflection on today's Gospel so God bless you all. Morning.