

4th Sunday Year B

OUR TEACHER, WORD OF THE LORD

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www.sjti.ac.za/resources_homily.html

First Reading: Deuteronomy 18:15-20
Responsorial Psalm: "**O that today you would listen to his voice! Harden not your hearts**" (94:9)
Response: Psalm 94: 1-2. 6-9. 2, 4, 7-11
Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 7: 32-35
Gospel: Mark 1:21-28.

The Risen Lord speaks today with authority as he did two thousand years ago. Listen to his voice. Hear his word.

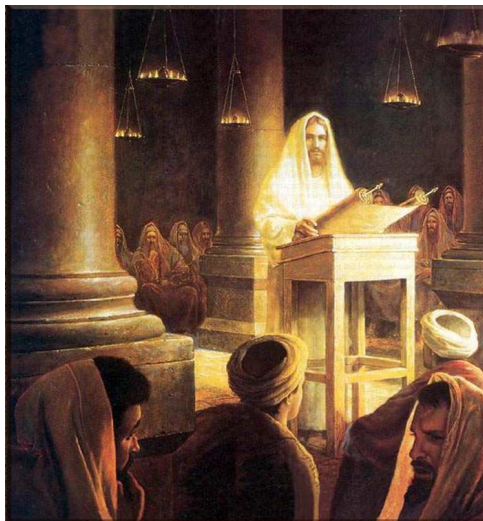
In Old Testament times, God spoke through his prophet Moses and promised to send another prophet like him. "**God will raise up for you a prophet**" (Deut.18:15).

He will teach the people and show them the way of the Lord. "**I will put my words into his mouth and he shall tell them all I command him**" (Deut.18:17).

This is fulfilled in Jesus Christ whose **teaching made a deep impression**" (Mk. 1:22).

Jesus is the Teacher *par excellence*. He is the Word of God, everything that God has to say. He is the fullness of divine revelation. He is the full teaching of God. "**I know who you are: the Holy One of God**" (Mk.1:24).

**"God whose almighty Word,
Chaos and darkness heard,
And took their flight;
Hear us, we humbly pray,
And where the Gospel day
Sheds not its glorious ray,
Let there be light."**



He teaches "**with authority... gives orders even to unclean spirits and they obey him**" (Mk.1:27)

Jesus the Lord, is with us today, teaching, guiding his flock, "**the flock that is led by his hand**" (Ps. 94:9).

How are we doing? "**O that today you would listen to his voice! Harden not your hearts**" (Ps. 94:9).

We are exhorted to "**give our undivided attention to the Lord**" (1 Cor.7:32).

And St. Paul "**would like to see you free from all worry**" (1 Cor.7:32).

The Lord teaches us by his Word, **Sacred Scripture**. Meditate on today's gospel.

The Lord encounters us and he teaches us through the **Sacraments**, v.g. in the Eucharist.

Divine Teacher is also in **Teachings** of the Church, not all is written in scripture (Jn.21:25).

Christ teaches others in you. People hear and meet the Lord in you, by your **Witness**.

FOR THE CHILDREN

Read about Jesus the Teacher (*Mk 1:21-28*) and reflect on how he teaches us today.

Teach the children about how they can meet him (sacramentally) and learn from him.

Explain the authority and power of Jesus. How his word conquers darkness and brings light.

Listen to the teachings of Jesus and pass it on to others. Share some of the things Jesus taught.

**“Saviour who came to bring
On your redeeming wing
Healing and sight,
Health to the sick in mind,
Sight to the inly blind,
Oh now to all mankind
Let there be light.”**

FOR TEENAGERS (*Shared Christian Praxis*)

Your Present Action: *What is your understanding of Jesus’ teachings?*

Your Story and Vision: *How much of Jesus’ teaching is part of your life.*

Church’s Story: See how Church portrays Jesus and his teachings.

Church’s Story and Your Story: *How much do agree with the Church’s teaching?*

Your Vision and Church’s Vision: *How do you see your life with the Church?*

RCIA

The art of Jesus’ teaching consists of what he taught, how he taught; and who he taught. What he taught, is the kingdom of God, and himself as the tremendous gift of the Father. How he taught, included stories based on truths of life and faith. Who he taught, were Jews and gentiles, rich and poor, men and women, young and old. He teaches us today through word and sacrament, faith and witness.

LIFE EXPERIENCE

A word can sometimes be striking. I attended a rate-payers meeting in a local church-hall in Durban. A guest-speaker informed us that we are suffering from the repercussions of apartheid. An old Zulu lady, quite taken in by the word ‘repercussions,’ used it out of context and *ad nauseam*. She said that she did not realize that repercussions was the cause of all the trouble. We should have nothing more to do with repercussions. It is a dangerous thing and an apartheid word. We must tell the City Council to take repercussions and get the hell out.

How was the word understood? “*Izwi lendoda liyabhekwa(i)*, says a Zulu proverb, meaning ‘take careful note what a man says. Otherwise we are seduced by other meanings—‘*indlebe yisifebe’(ii)* i.e. ‘the ear is a harlot’, misled by words.

(i) **NYEMBEZI** C.L.S. *Zulu Proverbs*. Shuter & Shooter, Randburg. 1954. (i) p. 193 & (ii) p. 204 respectively.

Professor Nyembezi, as we knew him in our student years, made a wondrous collection of Zulu pro-verbs. I experienced some of them in conversation, reading Zulu newspapers and literature, such as *Inkinsela yasemGungundlovu*. Most of them are short and simple but full of meaning. They are known as **izaga** i.e. sayings, not categorically defined but rather a wide range of idioms, aphorisms and metaphoric expressions. They derive from experiences, personal and cultural, and their observations of nature. There are even contradictions, due to differing situations in which people may find themselves. Some proverbs,

being ancient, from legends and folk-tales, show why some words are missing, for the sake of balance, rhyme and rhythm, leaving one to figure out the sense of it all.

Izaga are a way of teaching and gives insight into the genius of the people. Jesus used the culture of his time, to teach not only the local people but the whole world.

LITTLE ANGELINA

Angelina is learning the use of abbreviations. She is even reading a book with an abbreviated title called “The BFG” which means the ‘Big Friendly Giant,’⁽ⁱ⁾ by Roald Dahl. In this age of abbreviations, she hears of ‘nuke’ for ‘nuclear’; ‘telly’ for ‘television’; ‘mike’ for ‘microphone’; and suchlike expressions.’ Who can blame Angelina for abbreviating ‘intersection’ into ‘intersex’; and what will be her abbreviation of ‘condominium’?

(i) **DAHL** Roald. *THE BFG*. Puffin. Penguin Group. London, U.K. 1982.

The **BFG** is defined as the ‘**B**ig **F**riendly **G**iant’ on page 22. This giant however, is fond of big words like ‘*scrumdiddlyumptious*,’ not to Angelina’s disgust but to her delight. The book speaks of gruesome giants who gobble up children. There is only one giant, the **BFG**, who can rid the world of such bloodthirsty creatures. He works with his little friend, a girl by the name of Sophie whom he carries in his top pocket or sometimes in one of his big ears. Sophie also has to learn some gigantic words, like flushbunking, proposterous and cloakcoaches. They finally achieve their goals, believe or not, with the help of the Queen of England.

Sophie is an inspiration to Angelina, as a brave girl who fights evil in order to save little children.

IMPORTANT WORD: *Jesus’ word*

We know the power of a word. It can bring happiness or sadness. It can make or break a person. How powerful is the Word of God! It made the universe. It brings salvation. The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us. It is the Alpha (**A**) and Omega (**Ω**) *i.e.* **A** to **Z**, the whole alphabet that spells it all, the first and the last, the ultimate reality of our being, the beginning and the end. Van Iersel tells us that the Word is “omnipotence and providence, active at all times and in all places, and ever concerned with creation—especially with man.”⁽ⁱ⁾

(i) **VAN IERSEL** B. *The Bible on the Living God*. Transl. H. Vaughan. Sheed & Ward. London. 1965. P.22.

Watchword: “**He taught them with authority**” (Mk. 1:22)

Hebrew: **Hayah melamdram keva’al gevurah.**

Greek: **En didaskon autous hos exousian echon.**

Latin: **Erat docens eos quasi potestatem habens.**

Portuguese: **Os ensinava como tendo autoridade.**

French: **Il les enseignait avec autorite.**

Afrikaans: **Hy het hulle geleer soos een wat gesag het.**

Zulu: **Wabafundisa njengonamandla.**

Xhosa: **Wayefundisa ngegunya.**

Sotho: **O ne a ba ruta jwaloka ya nang le matla.**

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CATECHETICS

Lesson 58:

CATECHESIS IN MODERN TIMES: DOCTRINAL CATECHESIS

All catechesis should have a doctrinal content if it is rooted in the tradition of the Church, bearing in mind its four pillars of faith of which doctrine plays a vital role. Doctrinal Catechesis here however is when the focus is specifically doctrinally oriented. This is when teaching is on certain truths of faith, such as dogma or creed. Catechisms were originally very doctrinaire. The first universal Catholic catechism of the Church, the Roman Catechism of Trent, 1555,

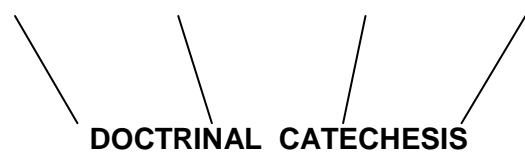
and the latest today, Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1992, are such compendiums of faith aiming to give all the teachings of the Church.

Catechetics is an important dynamic in the ongoing tradition of the Church. It has to be faithful to its sources, its apostolic roots, but also meaningful to everyday life. The catechism is not simply a body of teaching but a means to expediting it as a way of life, and life is not just recapturing the past but living the present moment with a vision of the future. Living our faith as Pope John XXIII reminded us with Vatican II, involves also being able to read the signs of the times. We have to be alert to what is happening around us, in the world, in the Church and in our lives, looking with the eyes of flesh and with the eyes of faith, the ancient faith of our fathers which we must live in the modern world.

Doctrinal Catechesis says we must know the truths of our faith, renew it daily, and grow in knowledge, wisdom and understanding. We have to know the content of our faith, what the Church teaches, *semper nova semper vetera*, 'ever old and ever new.' This body of tradition, of apostolic teaching, is known as the FIDEI DEPOSITUM and we should know, understand and be faithful to it. Hence the catechetical focus on doctrine. Doctrine must be taught with an appreciation of modern developments and methods of teaching. A simple dogmatic *Question/Answer approach* without explanation or application is not a means to a living faith and life encounter with Jesus. When teaching the creeds, dogmas or articles of faith, they should not be seen in isolation but integrated into the whole catechesis of the Church.

Mantenach and Pfeifer, in their book, 'Creative Catechist,' sum up the criteria for teaching doctrine, in terms of being authentic, complete, dynamic, holistic, international and cultural, fostering unity, community and Catholic identity. With these points in view, with the Holy Spirit, Doctrinal Catechesis is as powerful as any catechesis that can be given in the Church.

KOINONIA	LITURGEIA	WORD	KERYGMA	CATECHESIS	MARTYRIA	DIAKONIA
COMMUNITY	WORSHIP	BIBLE	PREACHING	TEACHING	LIFE	MINISTRY
CHURCH	LITURGY	SCRIPTURE	PROCLAMATION	DOCTRINE	WITNESS	SERVICE



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