

For Personal Reflection

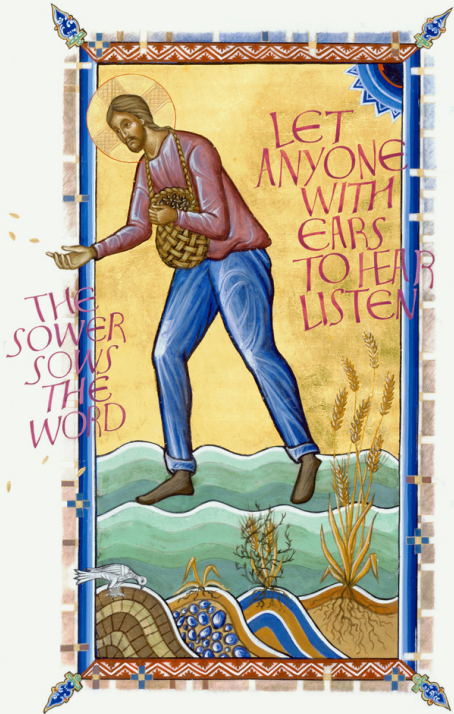
Reflect on the *Parable of the Sower* (Mark 4).

The Word is powerful but depends upon the soil in which it is found. Why does Jesus encourage us to share the Word of God, even when conditions could be better?

Has there been a time when the soil has been hard, and the Word of God didn't take root inside of you?

Has there been a time when you've been like the fertile ground, and the Word of God has taken root in you, creating a fruitful spiritual life?

What is one thing you can do to plant the seeds of God's Word this week?



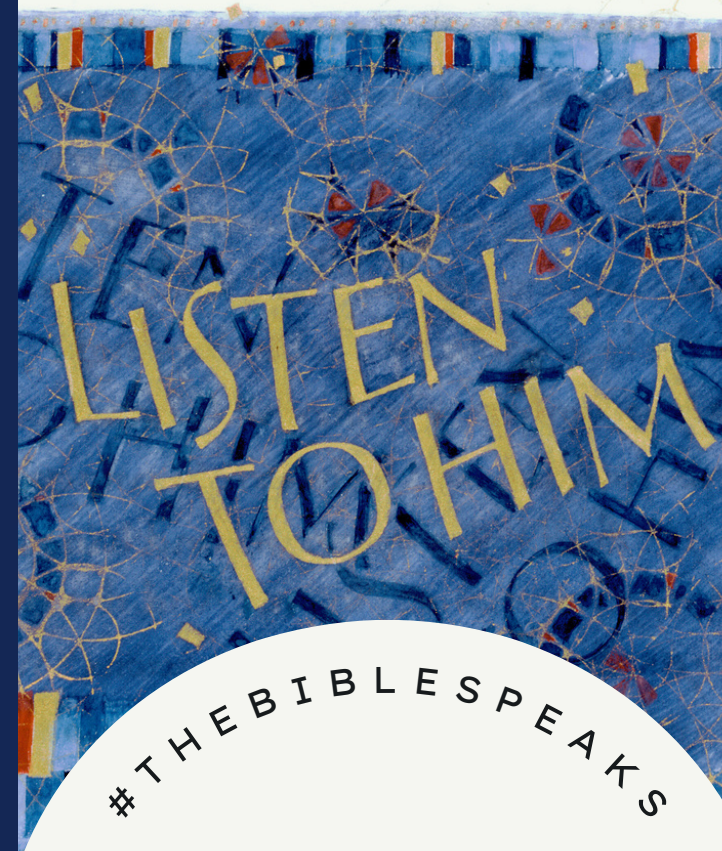
A Note about our Author/Presenter:



Fr. Thomas Rosica, CSB, a member of the Congregation of St. Basil (Basilian Fathers), a biblical scholar, lecturer, author and retreat director. Father has lectured across Canada, the USA, Ireland, Italy, India and the Middle East. He was Pastor and Executive Director of the Newman Centre Catholic Mission at the University of Toronto, National Director and CEO of World Youth Day 2002 in Canada and founding CEO of Salt and Light Catholic Media Foundation in Canada. He also worked with Vatican Communications and Media for several years.



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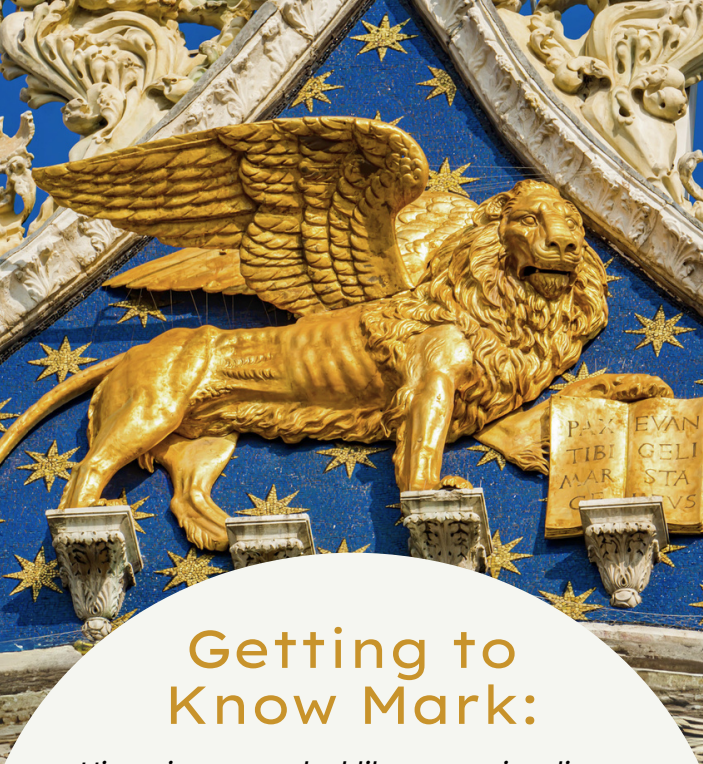
Sunday of the Word of God
3rd Sunday in Ordinary Time

The Gospel of Mark



DIocese of HAMILTON

www.hamiltondiocese.com



Getting to Know Mark:

His voice sounded like a roaring lion...

01

The Gospel of Mark is the **briefest in length** of the four Gospels and most likely the first that was written.

02

Most scholars agree that Mark wrote his account **shortly before 70 A.D. in Rome**, at a time of pending persecution and when the destruction of Jerusalem was imminent.

03

The Gospel's detailed and vivid descriptions of the ministry of Jesus offer insights not provided by Matthew or Luke. **Mark's message is powerful, stark, and direct.** We are invited and challenged to accept Jesus Christ as our Lord and Saviour.

The Winged Lion

Early Christians used creatures as symbols of the four Gospels. Saint Mark is symbolized as the winged lion. An angel, represented by a winged lion, appeared to Mark in a dream exclaiming, **"Peace to you Mark my Evangelist, here will rest your body."**

Breakdown of Mark's Gospel



- † Mark 1:1-13 - *Preparation for Jesus' ministry*
- † Mark 1:14-9:50 - *Jesus' ministry in Galilee*
- † Mark 10:1-52 - *Jesus' journey to Jerusalem*
- † Mark 11:1-13:37 - *The ministry in Jerusalem*
- † Mark 14:1-15:47 - *Jesus' suffering & death*
- † Mark 16:1-13 - *Jesus' resurrection & appearances*
- † Mark 16:14-20 - *Jesus' great commission & continued work from heaven*

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Key Features of Mark:

For Mark, Jesus is God's good news in the flesh; God's Son sent to save humanity through loving service and total sacrifice of his life.

Mark's Gospel is an extended passion narrative. We worship a crucified Christ. In Mark's day, many objected to the notion of a vulnerable Christ, but for Mark, the heart of the gospel is this: following a suffering Christ, a crucified criminal.

Mark ends his Gospel not with the appearances of the risen Jesus, but with a young man in an empty tomb telling the women that Jesus has been raised. The most striking aspect of Mark's ending is that we never encounter the Risen Lord!

Mark leaves us with profound questions: **"What does this story mean for me?"**, **"What does it mean for the Church?"**

Mark's account of Jesus' resurrection is constructed to jar us - to undo the ease that makes us forget that the call to discipleship is the call to the cross.

Of the four Gospel writers, Mark challenges us to listen more carefully and to think more deeply about Jesus.