



# Fourth Sunday Of The Year

## Speaking With Authority

### Introduction

When certain people begin to speak, we refuse to take them seriously. Why? Because for us their words carry no authority. When Christ spoke, all open-minded people listened. Why was this? Because he spoke with authority. His words had the ring of truth, and people knew he meant them. Do we listen to the words of Christ? What authority do our words carry?

### First Reading (Deut 18: 15-20)

Moses tells the people about coming of a prophet into whose mouth God will put his own words.

### Second Reading (1Cor 7: 32-35)

Paul here urges those who are celibate to give their undivided attention to the Lord.

### Gospel (Mark 1: 21-28)

Here we see the prophecy of Moses fulfilled in the teaching of Christ.

### Prayer Of The Faithful

Jesus spoke the words of the Father with an authority that made a deep impression on his listeners. We pray that we may be able to speak like him.

R: Lord, hear our prayer.

For the priests and ministers of the Church: that they may practice in their own lives the values they preach to others. We pray to the Lord.

R: Lord, hear our prayer.

For all who hold public office: that their deeds may match their words and their promises. We pray to the Lord.

R: Lord, hear our prayer.



Words can lift people up to heaven or plunge them down to hell: let us pray for the victims of broken promises, especially for deserted wives and husbands. We pray to the Lord.

R: Lord, hear our prayer.

Insincere words are as false and meaningless as smoke without fire: let us pray that we may always speak with sincerity to one another. We pray to the Lord.

R: Lord, hear our prayer.

### Communion Reflection

What was it about Christ that made him so different from the official teachers of his day, the scribes? It was the fact that he taught with personal authority.

No scribe ever expressed an opinion of his own. He would always begin by quoting his authority. He would buttress his statement with quotations from the great legal masters of the past. The last thing he would ever do was give an independent judgement.

How different Jesus was!  
When he spoke, he spoke as if he needed no authority beyond himself.  
He cited no authorities and quoted no experts.  
He spoke with the finality of the voice of God.

For the people, to hear someone speak like that, was like a cool breeze from the ocean on a hot stifling day.