



## Through the Eyes of Faith

January 21, 2017

Memorial of Saint Agnes, virgin and martyr

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*Mark 3:20-21*

Jesus came with his disciples into the house. Again the crowd gathered, making it impossible for them even to eat. When his relatives heard of this they set out to seize him, for they said, “He is out of his mind.”

**Introductory Prayer:** Another week has passed in your company, in your service. What a joy, what an honor, what a glory to be the subject of a king like you! Lord, I know that you make all things new and that through this moment of prayer you can give me a new vision of faith to see you more clearly.

**Petition:** Lord, help me to strive to be a source of happiness for others.

**1. Home life for Jesus Christ:** We know that Jesus made his home in Capernaum. (“And leaving Nazareth he went and dwelt in Capernaum” Mt. 4:13.) Today’s short Gospel passage indicates that Our Lord did not find rest at home. From all over, the great crowds to whom he has been preaching have followed him to his doorstep. When we return home from a hard day’s work, we likely seek a well-deserved rest, but perhaps a spouse and children wait for us there. They need to be shown our love, which involves our time, service, compassion, and support. Members of our extended family, neighbors, friends and people in need

also look to us for help and kindness. Those we love—, and of those in need, ought to pull us outside of ourselves, so that like Christ, we reach out and lovingly serve them throughout the entire day. When I come home, do I strive to be a source of happiness and support for the members of my family, or does my self-centeredness close me off to the needs of the others?

**2. A Man for Others:** “Jesus was a man for others. Such a crowd gathered around Jesus and his disciples that they had no time even to eat. Nothing mattered more to Jesus than feeding the souls of his neighbor with the nourishment of his love and his truth, so much so that he neglected to feed himself. This self-sacrificing attitude permeated every moment of his earthly existence, culminating in the complete oblation of his life on the cross at Calvary” (John Bartunek, LC, *The Better Part*, p. 375). To what extent is my desire to serve those around me, even to the point of sacrifice, the thermometer of my love for them? Have I ever been accused by anyone of “madness” because of my dedication to others?

**3. Out of His Mind?** Some of Jesus’ relatives, whose outlook was all too human, believed that Christ’s commitment to others was excessive. “The only explanation, they thought, was that he was out of his mind. On reading these words of the Gospel, we cannot help being moved, realizing what Jesus did for love of us: people even thought him mad. Many saints, following Christ’s example, have been taken for madmen — but they were mad with love, mad with love for Jesus Christ” (The Navarre Bible: St. Mark, p. 87). Do I long to love Christ, in my heart and in my life, even to the point of madness? Is my one great ideal in life to be a saint — not for my own sake, but in order to be able to transmit Christ’s love to those around me, to help bring about his Kingdom in souls?

**Conversation with Christ:** Thank you, Lord, for the gift of faith. It is a gift more precious than life itself. Help me to see others with the eyes of faith, to pour myself out in loving and serving them, just like you did. Help me to love you with madness as I serve each of my brothers and sisters.

**Resolution:** At the end of the day, I will pay special attention to fulfilling the needs and desires of my family members.