



Holy Gospel of Jesus Christ according to Saint Mark 1: 29-39.

On leaving the synagogue Jesus entered the house of Simon and Andrew with James and John. Simon's mother-in-law lay sick with a fever. They immediately told him about her. He approached, grasped her hand, and helped her up. Then the fever left her and she waited on them. When it was evening, after sunset, they brought to him all who were ill or possessed by demons. The whole town was gathered at the door. He cured many who were sick with various diseases, and he drove out many demons, not permitting them to speak because they knew him. Rising very early before dawn, he left and went off to a deserted place, where he prayed. Simon and those who were with him pursued him and on finding him said, "Everyone is looking for you." He told them, "Let us go on to the nearby villages that I may preach there also. For this purpose have I come." So he went into their synagogues, preaching and driving out demons throughout the whole of Galilee.

Introductory Prayer:

Lord, thank you for this time we will spend together. I wish to step away from the world and all its activities to be alone with you now. You are my beginning and my end: you created me, and you are leading me home to you in heaven. Thank you for your love. I know I deserve nothing from you and that my sins compound my unworthiness, yet you would still enfold me in your unfathomable love.

Petition:

Lord, increase my love for prayer and the interior life.

1. A Man for Others:

Here is Jesus in action. He works tirelessly from morning to night. He never thinks of himself. He never says he's too tired or too busy to serve someone or to give others part of his time. He is there for everyone, and he keeps pushing himself to do more and more. He loves, and his love compels him to give himself to everyone around him without counting the cost. The whole city gathers to see him, and he opens his heart to all. He teaches. He heals the sick. He casts out demons. He is a man for others.

2. A Man of Prayer:

After a full day of work, Jesus rested for just a little while, and then he rose early for prayer. There was a balance between his apostolic work and his life of prayer. Jesus wasn't too busy to seek the solitude necessary to speak heart-to-heart with his Father. He found strength in prayer. He strengthened his resolve to follow his Father's plan in prayer. He was absorbed in prayer for so long that the others began to go in search of him. Prayer wasn't just a one-time activity: it was part of his daily routine.

3. Everyone Is Searching for Him:

"Everyone is searching for you," they said when they found Christ. They expressed the desire of every person. We all need God. He is the deepest desire of the human heart. God is searching for us, too. Jesus gets up from his prayer and heads out to the next town. We are searching for Christ, and he is searching for us. Where do we meet him? In prayer. In prayer we speak heart-to-heart with the one whom we know loves us. In prayer we can speak about the things that are important to us and about those things that are most important to him. This vital encounter gives light and strength to every other encounter we will have during the rest of the day. Through prayer, our love for others is enkindled so that we can spend ourselves tirelessly for others as Jesus did. Through prayer, we can be a men and women for others.

Conversation with Christ:

Lord, help me to put you first in my life by giving you the best of my time. Help me not to give into laziness, but to rise early in the morning so that I can be with you. I need you in my life. Help me to experience your love so that I can share it with others. Help me to give myself to your plan of salvation and to reach out to those who are searching for you. Help me to hunger for you alone so that you will satisfy my hunger.

Resolution:

I will invoke Our Lord in short and simple prayers throughout today, telling him I love him and asking for the grace of a greater intimacy with him through prayer.