

FEBRUARY 1, 2015



FOURTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME



DEUTERONOMY 18:15 – 20

PSALM 95:1–2, 6–7, 7–9

1 CORINTHIANS 7:32 – 35

MARK 1:21–28

REFLECTION

In Jesus's time many illnesses were misunderstood. The mood swings of bipolar disorder were thought to reveal the presence of demons. Voices in someone's head (auditory hallucinations) seemed like a sign that evil had taken a person's mind. Today, even though we do know more about science, medicine, and the brain, there is still plenty of misunderstanding when it comes to mental illness. Sometimes people will even blame the person with a mental illness for not trying hard enough instead of helping them get the care they need. Today's readings call us to listen and to avoid being hard-hearted. This helps in our spiritual life but it also helps us have compassion for people who are struggling. The Gospel today tells us that Jesus both taught and healed "with authority" (Mark 1:22). Jesus's close relationship with God allowed him to preach with confidence and rely on his own heart. We can do the same if we keep in close contact with God through prayer and compassionate service.



The story of rapper Lecrae finding Jesus Christ.
www.youtube.com/watch?v=a5uNkFr2AWQ

ACTION

Take some time this week to learn more about mental illness. Visit the website of the National Alliance for Mental Illness (www.nami.org) to learn how you can get help for yourself or a friend or family member.

JOURNALING QUESTIONS

- Was there ever a time when you hardened your heart? How did you move beyond it?
- Reread the passage from 1 Corinthians. What are some of the things that distract you from God? What are you anxious about?