

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF DEACONS

5th Sunday in Ordinary Time – Year B
Balanced like Jesus

Deacon Mark Kelly

Of course, Jesus is the ultimate inspirational figure for Christians. He is a very tangible figure in Mark's gospel with much to teach us about balance in our lives! Certainly, he has stirred up sleepy Capernaum with his authoritative teaching and healing of the possessed man at the synagogue. Now Mark recounts the on-going action in this gospel story (*Mark 1:29-39*) as Jesus retires to Simon and Andrew's place together with the others of his A Team, James and John and there, discovering that Simon's mother-in-law is ill, cures her. After sunset Jesus obliges the queue of people gathering for physical or mental cure then rises before the sunrise for some quiet prayer time and gets on the road again. So much timeless wisdom here!

Firstly, we see flesh and blood relationships as central in Jesus' life. Fresh from his startling triumph at the synagogue, is not above going to his mate's place for lunch (and perhaps a wine or two). There is plenty to talk about with his four fisher mates.

Secondly, he clearly teaches us that Compassion beats Law. His fresh, compassionate perspective puts the well-being of his mate's mother-in-law above the detail of the Mosaic law banning curative work on the Sabbath. Then, once the Sabbath is over, we can imagine the demands of the excited citizens of Capernaum keeping him up into the wee hours of the night.

Finally, we see in his example how Contemplative Prayer centres us. Tired though he must have been, prayer is vital in his life, and so he spends time discerning to the Father's will for him. Then, confident, centred, renewed and focussed on his core mission, rather than being distracted from spreading the Good News, he moves on to bring God's message to the rest of Galilee and to the world.