



Jesus Healing the Demoniac

Explaining the Gospel Reading

Luke 8:26-39

We learn that the demon is torn between two wicked passions: impudence and fear. When he says, *What have I to do with You?* He shows the impudence of a shameless slave; when he says, *I beseech You*, he shows his fear. He was dwelling among the tombs because he wanted to instill in men the false suspicion that the souls of those who die become demons.

Any man who has demons within him and wears no garment and makes his home outside the house, is anyone who does evil and demonic deeds, and who has stripped himself of his baptismal robe, and who dwells outside the Church. Such a man is not worthy to enter into the Church, but instead he lives in the tombs of the dead and rotting deeds, for example, in brothels and in the chambers with the unrighteous.

When those who had been feeding the swine fled into the city, it became an opportunity for salvation for the Gadarenes, but they did not understand. They ought to have marveled at the Saviour's power and to have believed in Him. The Evangelist says that they *besought Him to depart from them*, instead of calling upon Him in supplication. They did this out of fear that they would suffer economic loss or another loss like that of the swine. But the man who had been healed shows indisputable proof of his healing. That he had been healed in his mind is showed by the fact that he now both recognizes Jesus and begs His permission to be with Him. For he was afraid, it would seem, that the demons would again easily assault him when he was separated from Jesus. But the Lord shows him that even if he is not with Jesus, the Lord's grace can shelter him from demonic attack. The Lord says to him, *Return to your own home, and tell what great things God has done for you*.

By not saying, "what great things I have done for you," the Lord gives us an example of humility and teaches us that we should attribute all our accomplishments to God. And even though the Lord had commanded him to tell what things God had done for him, he told instead what things Jesus had done for him, so great was his gratitude. Therefore when you do something good for someone, do not desire it to become public knowledge; but he who is the beneficiary of that good deed ought to be moved by gratitude to tell it to others, even though you do not what him to do so.