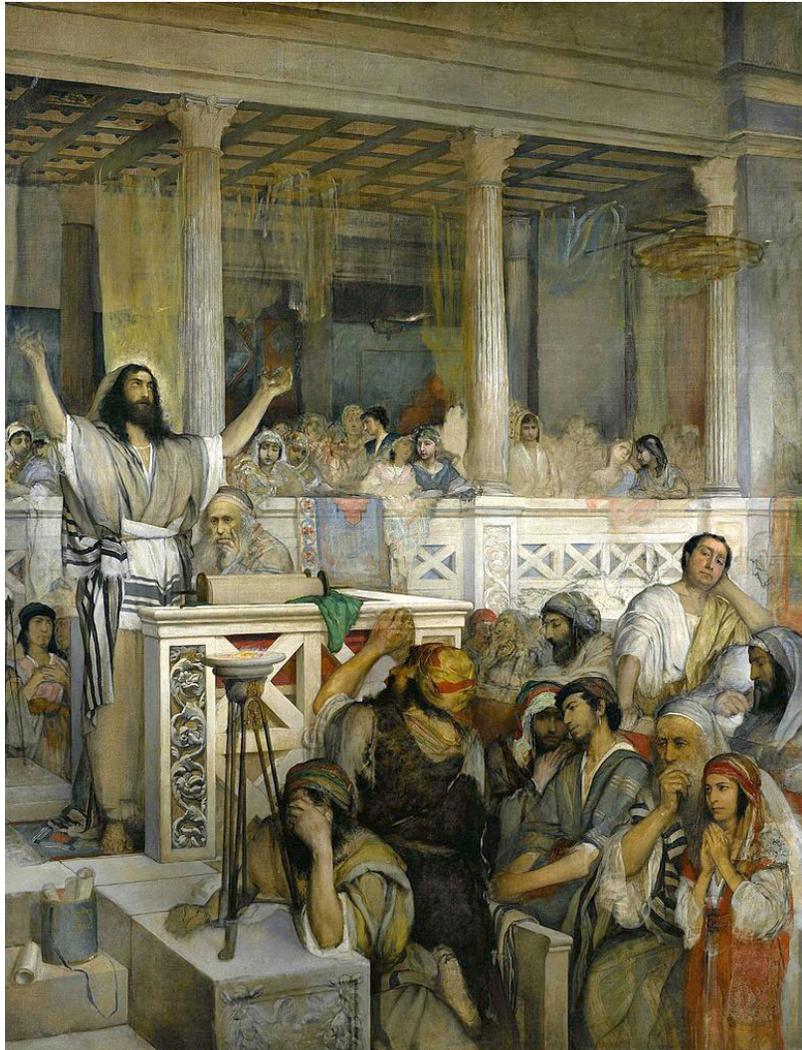


Lectionary Texts for January 28, 2018 • Fourth Sunday after the Epiphany - Year B
Deuteronomy 18:15-20 • Psalm 111 • 1 Corinthians 8:1-13 • Mark 1:21-28



Mark 1:21-28

Christ Preaching at Capernaum

Oil on canvas, 1878-1879

by Maurycy Gottlieb, Polish, 1856-1879

National Museum in Warsaw, Poland

The Semitic appearance of Christ, the Jewish clothing, the range of color, all are typical of the realism of Maurycy Gottlieb, a Polish Jewish painter with some 300 surviving works. *Christ Preaching at Capernaum* portrays Jesus as a normal human being in the Middle East setting of first-century Judea. Most of the congregation appears bored or indifferent, but the self-portrait

Continued

of Gottlieb, the young man toward the lower right corner, looks pensive. A Roman visitor, his head resting on his hand, wishes he hadn't attended. Anachronistically, a prayer rug depicting the Dome of the Rock hangs over the balustrade in this scene set centuries before the birth of Islam. It is presumed that this represents a vision of uniting nations and faiths. Gottlieb died at the age of 23, and many of his paintings, including this one, are unfinished.

Born in Poland, in a town now in Western Ukraine, Gottlieb studied painting in Lviv, (Ukraine), Vienna, Kraków, and Rome. He won a gold medal at a Munich art competition for his painting of Shylock and Jessica, portraying a scene from Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice*. Gottlieb's work ranges from portraits and contemporary settings from both Polish and Jewish society to Biblical scenes, drawing from both the New and Old Testaments as well as the Apocrypha. He considered his biblical paintings as historical rather than religious.

— Art curated and narrative provided by Norman Mahan

Texts: Deuteronomy 18:15-20 • Psalm 111 • 1 Corinthians 8:1-13 • Mark 1:21-28

Deuteronomy 18:15-20

The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own people; you shall heed such a prophet. This is what you requested of the Lord your God at Horeb on the day of the assembly when you said: "If I hear the voice of the Lord my God any more, or ever again see this great fire, I will die."

Then the Lord replied to me: "They are right in what they have said. I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their own people; I will put my words in the mouth of the prophet, who shall speak to them everything that I command. Anyone who does not heed the words that the prophet shall speak in my name, I myself will hold accountable. But any prophet who speaks in the name of other gods, or who presumes to speak in my name a word that I have not commanded the prophet to speak — that prophet shall die."

Psalm 111

Praise the Lord! I will give thanks to the Lord with my whole heart, in the company of the upright, in the congregation.

Great are the works of the Lord, studied by all who delight in them.

Full of honor and majesty is his work, and his righteousness endures forever.

He has gained renown by his wonderful deeds; the Lord is gracious and merciful.

He provides food for those who fear him; he is ever mindful of his covenant.

He has shown his people the power of his works, in giving them the heritage of the nations.

The works of his hands are faithful and just; all his precepts are trustworthy.

They are established forever and ever, to be performed with faithfulness and uprightness. He sent redemption to his people; he has commanded his covenant forever. Holy and awesome is his name.

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; all those who practice it have a good understanding. His praise endures forever.

1 Corinthians 8:1-13

Now concerning food sacrificed to idols: we know that “all of us possess knowledge.” Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up. Anyone who claims to know something does not yet have the necessary knowledge; but anyone who loves God is known by him.

Hence, as to the eating of food offered to idols, we know that “no idol in the world really exists,” and that “there is no God but one.” Indeed, even though there may be so-called gods in heaven or on earth — as in fact there are many gods and many lords — yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist.

It is not everyone, however, who has this knowledge. Since some have become so accustomed to idols until now, they still think of the food they eat as food offered to an idol; and their conscience, being weak, is defiled. “Food will not bring us close to God.” We are no worse off if we do not eat, and no better off if we do. But take care that this liberty of yours does not somehow become a stumbling block to the weak. For if others see you, who possess knowledge, eating in the temple of an idol, might they not, since their conscience is weak, be encouraged to the point of eating food sacrificed to idols? So by your knowledge those weak believers for whom Christ died are destroyed. But when you thus sin against members of your family, and wound their conscience when it is weak, you sin against Christ. Therefore, if food is a cause of their falling, I will never eat meat, so that I may not cause one of them to fall.

Mark 1:21-28

They went to Capernaum; and when the sabbath came, he entered the synagogue and taught. They were astounded at his teaching, for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.

Just then there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit, and he cried out, “What have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are, the Holy One of God.”

But Jesus rebuked him, saying, “Be silent, and come out of him!”

And the unclean spirit, convulsing him and crying with a loud voice, came out of him.

They were all amazed, and they kept on asking one another, “What is this? A new teaching — with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him.”

At once his fame began to spread throughout the surrounding region of Galilee.