

## 5<sup>th</sup> SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

FEBRUARY 4 2024

Continuing the Gospel reading from St. Mark, we witness the healing ministry of Jesus. Returning from the synagogue, where proclamation of Jesus as the 'Holy one of God' made so dramatically by the tormented man, the tiny group of disciples is welcomed in Simon and Andrew's house. After healing Simon's mother-in-law who is suffering from a fever, she immediately begins to share hospitality with them. This gesture portrays the importance of welcoming people, an essential quality of Christian life. The experience of being healed frees her to service and welcome.

Word about the healing event in the synagogue spreads quickly and people gather to be healed. Early the next morning Jesus slips away to pray by Himself. This constant resource in Jesus' life sustains and comforts Him. It was so evident that the Gospel is full of references, to remind us of the importance of prayer in our own lives.

The disciples remind Jesus of this, but they are led away by Jesus to continue the work of sharing the Good News in new places. There is a real sense of urgency; Jesus and the disciples proclaim and the newly enlightened are challenged to welcome, heal and bring comfort to the sick, the searching and the lost. As so aptly said by St. Paul in the 2<sup>nd</sup> reading:

'For though I am free with respect to all, I have made myself a slave to all, so that I might win more of them.'

'Our loving heart sets another of fire.' (St. Augustine)

May we light up the world with the fire of God's love!

Blessings of love and peace! Fr. Don