

Service for Week 16<sup>th</sup> -22<sup>nd</sup> June 2025

By Chaplain Andy

### **Our Opening Prayer.**

Loving God, we sometimes let wrong thoughts and actions poison our minds, we make the same mistakes we have always made, and we ignore your will.

We praise you that your goodness is never exhausted. Forgive our weakness, our foolishness and our wrongdoing. We thank you for overcoming the evil in our lives, enabling us to put the past behind us and making all things new.

In the name of Jesus Christ.

**Amen**

### *The Lord's Prayer*

Our Father who art in heaven,  
hallowed be Thy name.....

**Amen**

### **Bible Reading Luke 8:26-39**

They (the disciples and Jesus) sailed to the region of the Gerasenes, which is across the lake from Galilee. When Jesus stepped ashore, he was met by a demon-possessed man from the town. For a long time, this man had not worn clothes or lived in a house, but had lived in the tombs.

When he saw Jesus, he cried out and fell at his feet, shouting at the top of his voice, "What do you want with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg you, don't torture me!"

For Jesus had commanded the evil spirit to come out of the man. Many times it had seized him, and though he was chained hand and foot and kept under guard, he had broken his chains and had been driven by the demon into solitary places.

Jesus asked him, "What is your name?" "Legion," he replied, because many demons had gone into him. And they begged him repeatedly not to order them to go into the Abyss. A large herd of pigs was feeding there on the hillside. The demons begged Jesus to let them go into them, and he gave them permission. When the demons came out of the man, they went into the pigs, and the herd rushed down the steep bank into the lake and was drowned. When those tending the pigs saw what had happened, they ran off and reported this in the town and countryside, and the people went out to see what had happened.

When they came to Jesus, they found the man from whom the demons had gone out, sitting at Jesus' feet, dressed and in his right mind; and they were afraid. Those who had seen it told the people how the demon-possessed man had been cured. Then all the people of the region of the Gerasene asked Jesus to leave them, because they were overcome with fear. So, he got into the boat and left. The man from whom the demons had gone out begged to go with him, but Jesus sent him away,



saying, "Return home and tell how much God has done for you." So the man went away and told all over town how much Jesus had done for him.

*Holy words, Holy wisdom,*

***Thanks be to God.***

### Reflection

Jesus, I believe, wanted to demonstrate to the disciples and his followers that he really was not just a prophet but from God and of God. This was to strengthen their faith and to give them the conviction necessary to spread his message of God's love and forgiveness and to start what was to become the worldwide Christian church.

He did this through showing that he could change natural things such as creating and then calming the wind and the waves across the sea of Galilee but also that he could bring about physical change through healing the sick and making the blind see. Our reading from Luke's gospel describes one such incident where Jesus heals a man who is affected mentally by evil thoughts that have taken control of the man's mind and actions.

Luke in recording this account is demonstrating that not only Jesus had the authority through God and the power to drive out evil, but also how the man was completely cured by Jesus and was able to live a normal life once more. The man who was an

outcast was restored to the community and to the kingdom of God.

One very strange part of this account is the evil, when it left the man, being allowed by Jesus to go into the pigs. Why pigs? I have always thought that it was rather hard on the innocent pigs! We know that pigs were considered to be to be unclean, and this may be one reason. But I believe the real message that Jesus has for us is that God can completely overcome and destroy evil.

The demons 'came out of the man, they went into the pigs, and the herd rushed down the steep bank into the lake and was drowned.' The evil had been destroyed and could not return to the man.

In a similar way evil thoughts and deeds, if they start to take over in our lives can be completely destroyed by God. In asking, through Jesus if we find that easier, for God's deliverance from our evil thoughts and past actions we can be sure of God's forgiveness. We can be at peace in the knowledge that the evil is destroyed and forgotten about.

**Amen**

### Closing Prayer.

Loving Jesus, I ask you to destroy the wrong thoughts and actions in my life and ask for your forgiveness.

**Amen.**

Prayers inspired by Prayerfully Yours by Nick Fawcett