

# Shared Faith Leadership in the Markan households

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## 1. Introducing the Gospel of Mark

## 2. Central gospel themes in Mark

- The 'household' is presumed and central.
- Mark links household leadership to discipleship.
- Mark presents Jesus as lonely and misunderstood; the disciples as blind, stumbling and argumentative.
- The gospel ends in failure, not success.

## 3. Engaging Mark's gospel

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### **Mk. 1:14-15**

<sup>14</sup> Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, <sup>15</sup> and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom (*basileia*) of God has come near; repent (*metanoia*), and believe in the good news."

### **Mk. 3:13-15**

<sup>13</sup> He went up the mountain and called to him those whom he wanted, and they came to him. <sup>14</sup> And he appointed twelve, whom he also named apostles, to be with him, and to be sent out to proclaim the message, and have authority to cast out demons.

### **Mk. 7:31-37**

<sup>31</sup> Then he returned from the region of Tyre, and went by way of Sidon towards the Sea of Galilee, in the region of the Decapolis. <sup>32</sup> They brought to him a deaf man who had an impediment in his speech; and they begged him to lay his hand on him. <sup>33</sup> He took him aside in private, away from the crowd, and put his fingers into his ears, and he spat and touched his tongue. <sup>34</sup> Then looking up to heaven, he sighed and said to him, "Ephphatha," that is, "Be opened." <sup>35</sup> And immediately his ears were opened, his tongue was released, and he spoke plainly. <sup>36</sup> Then Jesus ordered them to tell no one; but the more he ordered them, the more zealously they proclaimed it. <sup>37</sup> They were astounded beyond measure, saying, "He has done everything well; he even makes the deaf to hear and the mute to speak."

### **Mk. 8:22-27**

<sup>22</sup> They came to Bethsaida. Some people brought a blind man to him and begged him to touch him. <sup>23</sup> He took the blind man by the hand and led him out of the village; and when he had put saliva on his eyes and laid his hands on him, he asked him, "Can you see anything?" <sup>24</sup> And the man looked up and said, "I can see people, but they look like trees, walking." <sup>25</sup> Then Jesus laid his hands on his eyes again; and he looked intently and his sight was restored, and he saw everything clearly. <sup>26</sup> Then he sent him away to his home, saying, "Do not even go into the village." <sup>27</sup> Jesus went on with his disciples to the villages of Caesarea Philippi; and on the way he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that I am?"

### **Mk. 10:46-52**

<sup>46</sup> They came to Jericho. As he and his disciples and a large crowd were leaving Jericho, Bartimaeus son of Timaeus, a blind beggar, was sitting by the roadside. <sup>47</sup> When he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to shout out and say, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" <sup>48</sup> Many sternly ordered him to be quiet, but he cried out even more loudly, "Son of David, have mercy on me!" <sup>49</sup> Jesus stood still and said, "Call him here." And they called the blind man, saying to him, "Take heart; get up, he is calling you." <sup>50</sup> So throwing off his cloak, he sprang up and came to Jesus. <sup>51</sup> Then Jesus said to him, "What do you want me to do for you?" The blind man said to him, "My teacher, let me see again." <sup>52</sup> Jesus said to him, "Go; your faith has made you well." Immediately he regained his sight and followed him on the way.

### **Mk. 15:33-39**

<sup>33</sup> When it was noon, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. <sup>34</sup> At three o'clock Jesus cried out with a loud voice, "Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?" which means, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" <sup>35</sup> When some of the bystanders heard it, they said, "Listen, he is calling for Elijah." <sup>36</sup> And someone ran, filled a sponge with sour wine, put it on a stick, and gave it to him to drink, saying, "Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to take him down." <sup>37</sup> Then Jesus gave a loud cry and breathed his last. <sup>38</sup> And the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. <sup>39</sup> Now when the centurion, who stood facing him, saw that in this way he breathed his last, he said, "Truly this man was God's Son!"

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#### 4. Summary:

- Mark's Gospel offers central insights for shared faith leadership considered from the perspective of the values of Kildare Ministries: courage, hope, hospitality, justice, wonder and compassion.

- Mark encourages us to reflect on shared faith leadership in terms of ongoing ‘conversion’ (*metanoia*). This is a critical discipleship attitude. It entails fundamental openness.
  - Leadership believes in the presence and action of the *basileia*. This shapes action.
  - Shared faith leadership helps form communities of care, openness, respect, release, enabling the articulation and vision of faith in the presence of the *basileia* acting in Jesus.
  - Companionship *with* Jesus and a conviction of God’s presence and action in the world that brings healing and release characterize shared faith leadership.
  - Those in shared faith leadership seek to ‘see’, are not driven by success and know about suffering.
  - Misunderstanding, failure and suffering accompany authentic faith leaders.
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5. For personal (and, later, collegial) reflection:

- How do these insights into shared leadership from Mark’s gospel speak to (encourage, affirm, challenge...) your approach to shared leadership?
- How does Mark’s Gospel and the gospel portrait of Jesus speak to your enacting the values of courage, hope, hospitality, justice, wonder and compassion?

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