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21 SATURDAY

St Agnes  
Saturday, 2<sup>nd</sup> Week of Ordinary Time

2 Sam 1: 1-4, 11-12, 19, 23-27  
Ps 79: 2-3, 5-7  
Mark 3: 20-21

This gospel reading is the shortest of all Sunday or weekday gospels: so brief, dramatic, and catching immediate attention. There's a feeling of urgency: Jesus has hardly begun His work, healing and teaching, and quickly He's surrounded by crowds wanting to touch Him. He's just chosen His team of twelve apostles, and returns to His home. Immediately He's again mobbed by crowds, so insistent and demanding that there's no time or chance even to eat. Jesus' behaviour, in allowing Himself to be so overwhelmed, alarmed His family too, and they went to try and restrain Him. And people were saying He'd gone out of His mind, was 'crazy'. Excitement, enthusiasm, pressure: if the gospel scene sounds rather like the kind of frenzy that in our modern world sometimes surrounds pop-stars or sports heroes or movie-stars, maybe we should remind ourselves that that actually was the effect Jesus had. He inspired enthusiasm in people, and they took time to go after Him, to follow and listen to Him. And He gave His whole time and attention to them. There was an urgency in His message and work.

Is there an urgency today about His message, or in the way His modern disciples present Him in our world? Do we His followers feel the same kind of enthusiasm and excitement in wanting to hear Him, get close to Him? People said Jesus was crazy, for the things He did and for putting peoples' needs before His own. If we Christians are sometimes called 'crazy', is it for the same reason? At least, let's make time to be with Him.