

Wednesday Sept 4th for the 23rd Sunday in Ordinary Time

OPENING PRAYER: Loving and caring God, thank you for gathering us together to share your Word. Help us to humbly welcome the Word you speak to us today. Remove our fears so that we may be free to serve you with our whole heart. This we pray through Christ our Lord. Amen.

- In the words of Saint Benedict, “Listen with the ears of your heart.”
- Please note a word, phrase, or verse that seemed to really catch your notice.
- A volunteer slowly read aloud today’s passage Afterwards, we have a few minutes of silent reflection.

READING OF THE ASSIGNED GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MARK

Mark 7:31-37

The Healing of a Deaf Man.

31ⁱ Again he left the district of Tyre and went by way of Sidon to the Sea of Galilee, into the district of the Decapolis.

32 And people brought to him a deaf man who had a speech impediment and begged him to lay his hand on him.

33 He took him off by himself away from the crowd. He put his finger into the man’s ears and, spitting, touched his tongue;

34 then he looked up to heaven and groaned, and said to him, “*Ephphatha!*” (that is, “Be opened!”)

35 And [immediately] the man’s ears were opened, his speech impediment was removed, and he spoke plainly.

36^{*} He ordered them not to tell anyone. But the more he ordered them not to, the more they proclaimed it.

37 They were exceedingly astonished and they said, “He has done all things well. He makes the deaf hear and [the] mute speak.”^k

* [7:24–37] The withdrawal of Jesus to the district of Tyre may have been for a respite ([Mk 7:24](#)), but he soon moved onward to Sidon and, by way of the Sea of Galilee, to the Decapolis. These districts provided a Gentile setting for the extension of his ministry of healing because the people there acknowledged his power ([Mk 7:29, 37](#)). The actions attributed to Jesus ([Mk 7:33–35](#)) were also used by healers of the time.

* [7:27–28] The figure of a household in which children at table are fed first and then their leftover food is given to the dogs under the table is used effectively to acknowledge the prior claim of the Jews to the ministry of Jesus; however, Jesus accedes to the Gentile woman's plea for the cure of her afflicted daughter because of her faith.

* [7:36] The more they proclaimed it: the same verb *proclaim* attributed here to the crowd in relation to the miracles of Jesus is elsewhere used in Mark for the preaching of the gospel on the part of Jesus, of his disciples, and of the Christian community ([Mk 1:14; 13:10; 14:9](#)). Implied in the action of the crowd is a recognition of the salvific mission of Jesus; see note on [Mt 11:5–6](#).

QUESTIONS FOR SHARING

1. Recall the time you first heard God speak to your heart. How did it affect you and do you still hear?
2. Do you suffer from any form of physical or mental disability? If so, what helps you to deal with it? If you don't suffer from a disability, what one do you fear the most?
3. How has your tongue been loosed or freed to share your faith with others?
4. What is one thing Jesus is saying to us in this Sunday's Gospel about how a disciple should speak or act? And what do you need to do or change to be a better disciple?

Commentary

Mark sometimes uses geographical locations to make a theological statement. The healing of the deaf and mute man takes place in Gentile territory. Mark's point: the Gospel Christ comes to preach and the Kingdom he inaugurates are intended for the Jews as well as for the Gentiles. Jesus teaches his disciples the importance of including those considered outsiders in his Kingdom.

The Gospel is the fulfillment of the first reading from Isaiah 35:4-7, which speaks about God healing the deaf and the mute. In this story, Jesus is showing his concern and hospitality for someone who is most likely excluded from the community. He offers healing, acceptance, and wholeness to a man with two disabilities. Notice that Jesus physically touches the man. The deaf and mute man is, in a way, symbolic of the Gentile people. Until that time, they are unable to hear God's message and unable to speak it. But in this Gospel, Jesus changes all that. Unlike their Jewish counterparts, the Gentiles are able to hear the message and proclaim it to others. They prove themselves to be disciples by becoming hearers and doers of the Word. The command not to tell anyone is called the "messianic secret." Because most of the people have a wrong understanding of the nature of the Messiah (they expect him to be a military person, a new David), Jesus does not want his messiahship to be broadcast until he has time to explain its true nature, namely, that of a suffering servant. Jesus will conquer, not with military might, but by suffering on the cross.

IS THERE A CAUSE FOR GRATITUDE THIS WEEK?

IS THERE A PRAYER REQUEST YOU HAVE?

CLOSING PRAYER - The Lord's Prayer

Bible Sharing Parish Hall and Zoom
Wednesday, Sept 4 6:30 – 7:30pm
Weekly on Wednesday
Zoom Meeting

Description: Blessed Sacrament is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: Blessed Sacrament's Zoom Meeting

Time: Sept 4, 2024 06:30 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Please download and import the following iCalendar (.ics) files to your calendar system.

Weekly: https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/tZolduisqDosE923wHRoszXqNBSkCL57ORPg/ics?icsToken=98tyKuGhpjorHtKTthCORpx5Goj4d-jwpiFdj_oPzwjNMS9AeDvnGMBxOZFTRY

Blessed Sacrament is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85136740699?pwd=Q2pXLzdzZFdNNU1NajVpeEtKUohJQT09>

Meeting ID: 811 6265 5618

Passcode: 280607