

# SUNDAY GOSPEL BIBLE SHARING



**Wednesday Sept 25th for the 26th Sunday in Ordinary Time**

**OPENING PRAYER: Father, thank you for gathering us together to share life and your Word. Open our minds and hearts to hear the Word you want us to take with us today. Open our hearts to the surprising ways of your Spirit. 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 9:38-43,45,47-48**

38 John said to him,<sup>l</sup> “Teacher, we saw someone driving out demons in your name, and we tried to prevent him because he does not follow us.”

39 Jesus replied, “Do not prevent him. There is no one who performs a mighty deed in my name who can at the same time speak ill of me.

40 For whoever is not against us is for us.<sup>m</sup>

41 Anyone who gives you a cup of water to drink because you belong to Christ, amen, I say to you, will surely not lose his reward.<sup>n</sup>

42<sup>o</sup> “Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe [in me] to sin, it would be better for him if a great millstone were put around his neck and he were thrown into the sea.

43 If your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter into life maimed than with two hands to go into Gehenna,\* into the unquenchable fire.

[44]\*

45 And if your foot causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter into life crippled than with two feet to be thrown into Gehenna.

[46]

47 And if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out. Better for you to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye than with two eyes to be thrown into Gehenna,

48 where 'their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched.'

## Notes

\* [9:38–41] Jesus warns against jealousy and intolerance toward others, such as exorcists who do not follow us. The saying in Mk 9:40 is a broad principle of the divine tolerance. Even the smallest courtesies shown to those who teach in Jesus' name do not go unrewarded.

\* [9:43, 45, 47] Gehenna: see note on Mt 5:22.

\* [9:44, 46] These verses, lacking in some important early manuscripts, are here omitted as scribal additions. They simply repeat Mk 9:48 itself a modified citation of Is 66:24.

## QUESTIONS FOR SHARING

1. In our readings today, both Jesus and Moses condemn intolerance as restricting the way God can work. Can you name some instances where the Spirit is at work in people that we may not see or notice?
2. What are some ways that we or other Christians can give scandal to others? Name ways that parents and other adults can scandalize children.
3. What helps you to cut out of your lives a behavior that is hindering your growth in Christ?
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**

Jesus gives four declarations on faithful discipleship:

- The first declaration (v 38-41) connects the Gospel to the first reading. In both readings, Jesus and Moses tell the people that God can work outside of institutions or some “in groups.” One doesn’t need to be a member of the Twelve to perform an exorcism. Jesus’ words remind us of a saying attributed to St. Augustine: “God has many whom the Church does not have. The Church has many whom God does not have.” Jesus’ saying, “Whoever is not against us is for us,” is a good principle to follow in ecumenical dialogue with both Christians and non-Christians.
- In the second declaration (v.41), Jesus says that all who support missionaries will be rewarded.
- The third declaration (vv 42-44) concerns bringing scandal, especially to children: “Whoever causes these little ones to sin....” To commit sin is bad enough; to cause another to fall into sin is worse. (See the Catechism, paragraph 2284-2285 for strong words on the gravity of causing scandal.)
- In the fourth declaration, Jesus uses a “surgical metaphor” to speak about the importance of avoiding occasions of sin. Jesus is not proposing self-mutilation of hands, feet and eyes. He is rather saying that if there is anything in our lives that comes between us and our relationship with God, it must be rooted out. This may be as painful as a surgical operation, like cutting out a part of our own body, but if we are to experience happiness and peace, it must be done. Jesus ends by saying that spiritual surgery is certainly preferable to Gehenna (hell).

Some of us may struggle with the question of how a good and loving God could send someone to hell. Regarding this question, Scripture scholar Mary Healy writes, “The truth conveyed in Jesus’ teaching is that we choose our own destiny. With every decision and action over the course of a lifetime we orient ourselves either to heaven or to hell, and at the moment of death we embrace what has truly become our choice. C. S. Lewis expresses it well: “There are only two kinds of people in the end: those who say to God, ‘Thy will be done,’ and those to whom God says, in the end, ‘Thy will be done.’ All that are in hell, choose it. Without that self-choice there could be no Hell. But God never ceases to hold out his unfathomable mercy,

even at the very moment when a person steps over the threshold into eternity.”

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 25 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 25, 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](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