



BREAKING OPEN THE WORD

September 5, 2021

Twenty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time

Lectionary: 128

Gospel Mk 7:31-37

Again, Jesus left the district of Tyre and went by way of Sidon to the Sea of Galilee, into the district of the Decapolis. And people brought to him a deaf man who had a speech impediment and begged him to lay his hand on him. He took him off by himself away from the crowd. He put his finger into the man's ears and, spitting, touched his tongue; then he looked up to heaven and groaned, and said to him, "*Ephphatha!*" — that is, "Be opened!" — And immediately the man's ears were opened, his speech impediment was removed, and he spoke plainly. He ordered them not to tell anyone. But the more he ordered them not to, the more they proclaimed it. They were exceedingly astonished, and they said, "He has done all things well. He makes the deaf hear and the mute speak."

Spiritual Reflection: In Mark's Gospel we hear of Jesus hearing a deaf man and since Mark believes Jesus is the Word of God, Mark is also talking about Spiritual Deafness. Here are six ways to become a better listener that I believe can be applied to our prayer life as well: 1) Listen to learn & not simply to be polite. 2) Quiet your own agenda. 3) Ask more questions 4) Pay attention to your talk/listening ratio. 5) Repeat back what you heard. 6) Wait until the person is finished talking before responding.

Spiritual Questions:

1. How is Jesus using earthly things (mud/spit/speech) foreshadowing the Sacraments?
2. How can becoming a better listener in life make you a better listener in prayer?
3. Do you think Jesus "has done all things well"?
4. Do you give God time to speak to you?
5. Is there someone in your life that you want God to heal?