


# Living the Word

MEDITATING ON THE SUNDAY GOSPEL

Year B - 23rd Sunday in Ordinary Time

A resource for personal, family and community prayer.



“And his ears were opened...”

## *Gospel: Mark 7: 31-37*

*You are invited to read the Gospel passage attentively, respectfully and reverently as a gift of God.*

<sup>31</sup>Returning from the district of Tyre, Jesus went by way of Sidon towards the Sea of Galilee, right through the Decapolis region.<sup>32</sup>And they brought him a deaf man who had an impediment in his speech; and they asked him to lay his hands on him. <sup>33</sup>He took him aside in private, away from the crowd, put his fingers into the man’s ears and touched his tongue with spittle. <sup>34</sup>Then looking up to heaven he sighed; and he said to him, “Ephphatha”, that is, “Be opened”. <sup>35</sup>And his ears were opened, and the ligament of his tongue was loosened and he spoke clearly. <sup>36</sup>And Jesus ordered them to tell no one about it, but the more he insisted, the more widely they published it.

<sup>37</sup>Their admiration was unbounded. “He has done all things well,” they said; “he makes the deaf hear and the dumb speak.”

### Background to Gospel passage

**Where does it happen?** The Decapolis was a confederation of ten cities north-east of the Jordan river and was a predominantly gentile (non- Jewish) region.

**When does it happen?** This passage follows the encounter of Jesus with the courageous Syro-phoenician woman who had challenged him to broaden his mission so as to include the gentile world.

**Who is there?** The deaf man and his friends, along with Jesus and his followers.

**What happens?** Jesus is moved with compassion for the deaf man and takes him aside in private to maintain his dignity. Through the tenderness of his touch and the power of his prayer, Jesus heals the deaf man. At the same time he opens the ears and mouths of the on-lookers to proclaim the saving work of God.

**Suggested Guidelines** to help you recognise this passage in your life experience.

**“They brought a deaf man to Jesus”** Can you enter into this experience by remembering a time when you were moved by someone’s pain or suffering and you accompanied them to a person or place where you hoped they would receive the help they needed?

**“ He took him aside in private, away from the crowd...”** Can you enter into this experience by remembering a time when you

responded with sensitivity and respect to someone in need and you gave of your whole self in a very close and concrete way?

**“And his ears were opened...”** Remember the Jesus people who opened your ears and your heart to listen and to learn from others whose voices you had previously ignored or neglected.

**What does this gospel remind me of? Where was it? When was it? Who was there? What happened?**

*Now I see that God was in that life experience!*

**Prayer Response** - you are invited to respond in prayer in your own words.

*Heavenly Father, I thank you...*

*Heavenly Father, I am sorry...*

*Heavenly Father, please help me...*



You are invited to deepen this prayer experience by resting your heart silently in God's presence and love. The quiet repetition of a word or phrase from the passage may help you on this journey to stillness and silence?

### **An Invitation to Reflect**

What new insight has the Gospel opened my eyes to see?

### **Action**

This week I will try to live the Gospel by...

### **Thought for the week**

Compassion hears not only with the ears but with the heart.

*Rest in this truth, hold it in prayer and trust that it will bear fruit in your life.*

# Children

Jesus reaches out to heal a man who is suffering because he cannot hear or speak. Jesus opens the man's ears and mouth so that he can live life to the full.

Can you think of a 'Jesus person', maybe a parent, grandparent or doctor, who reached out to help you when you were suffering?

Draw or write about this 'Jesus person' and how they helped you when you were suffering.



Father, I thank you for the gift of this story which has opened my eyes to see Your presence in my life.

**Action: this week I will try to show love by...**

For more information check out our website: [lectio.newrydominican.com](http://lectio.newrydominican.com)

E. [lectiocentre35@gmail.com](mailto:lectiocentre35@gmail.com)