

**September 8<sup>th</sup> 2024 23rd Sunday of Ordinary Time Year B Mark 7:31-37**

<sup>31</sup> Then he returned from the region of Tyre, and went by way of Sidon towards the Sea of Galilee, in the region of the Decapolis. <sup>32</sup>They brought to him a deaf man who had an impediment in his speech; and they begged him to lay his hand on him. <sup>33</sup>He took him aside in private, away from the crowd, and put his fingers into his ears, and he spat and touched his tongue. <sup>34</sup>Then looking up to heaven, he sighed and said to him, ‘Ephphatha’, that is, ‘Be opened.’ <sup>35</sup>And immediately his ears were opened, his tongue was released, and he spoke plainly. <sup>36</sup>Then Jesus ordered them to tell no one; but the more he ordered them, the more zealously they proclaimed it. <sup>37</sup>They were astounded beyond measure, saying, ‘He has done everything well; he even makes the deaf to hear and the mute to speak.’

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>Read and re-read</b> – out loud and slowly the Gospel.</li> <li>➤ <b>Meditate</b> - on reading as being spoken to you, an experience in your life.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>Pray</b> - Thanksgiving – Repentance – Petition.</li> <li>➤ <b>Action</b> – Attitude (Call to change / to act /to do).</li> </ul>
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In this week’s gospel we read of the man who could neither hear nor speak and his friends brought him to Jesus. This man reminds us of those who cannot communicate. They cannot hear Gods word of truth and consolation. He cannot initiate conversation - with God or other human beings. Jesus takes the man 'aside in private'. This is an indication that healing often requires intimacy. In public we can run the risk of using people to bolster our ego or for our personal ambition. Jesus looked up to heaven because he knows the source of his healing powers is there. He kept his word 'He makes the deaf hear and the dumb speak.'

Can you remember a time when your ears were opened and you heard in a new way that you are loved - by God and other people?

**Prayer:**

**Thank You Lord** for the humility of Jesus because He came to meet people where they were at in private away from the crowds.

**Forgive us Lord** for the times we do not hear what people are saying to us because of our own suspicions or judgements.

**Help us Lord** to be care givers like Jesus listening with open ears and compassion enabling them to realise there are people willing to help them on their often difficult journey.