

Friday's Gospel: Making the Deaf Hear

Gospel for Friday in the 5th Week of Ordinary Time, and commentary.

Gospel (*Mk 7:31-37*)

Then Jesus returned from the region of Tyre, and went through Sidon to the Sea of Galilee, through the region of the Decapolis. And they brought to him a man who was deaf and had an impediment in his speech; and they besought him to lay his hand upon him. And taking him aside from the multitude privately, he put his fingers into his ears, and he spat and

touched his tongue; and looking up to heaven, he sighed, and said to him, “Ephphatha,” that is, “Be opened.” And his ears were opened, his tongue was released, and he spoke plainly.

And he charged them to tell no one; but the more he charged them, the more zealously they proclaimed it. And they were astonished beyond measure, saying, “He has done all things well; he even makes the deaf hear and the dumb speak.”

Commentary

The healing of the deaf-mute can help us reflect on how, in the spiritual life, our Lord can once again open the “ears” of the heart and untie its “tongue.” The Gospel passage tells us that the sick person was brought to Jesus by others. Those close to him would have probably

already tried all kinds of means to cure him, but with little success. Now their only concern is to bring about a personal encounter with Jesus.

This can also happen in the spiritual life. Sometimes we can suffer when we see friends who isolate themselves, who don't want to talk about their problems or listen to reasons for breaking with what distances them from God. What should we do? We should try to bring about a personal encounter with Christ: first, by our prayer and mortification, and then perhaps by speaking clearly and inviting them to reflect personally on their situation. Thus we can help these friends of ours to make progress "along an inclined plane," as Saint Josemaría used to say.

Jesus drew the sick man away from the crowd before working the miracle. To come into close contact

with our Lord, we will often need to separate ourselves from whatever is producing noise in our life. Not so much the external noise, but the internal: the noise that is produced when we lose our inner harmony and give free rein to all the demands of sight, taste, comfort. A first step towards conversion is often the recognition that living with our focus on what attracts our senses produces an inner void filled with undecipherable noise. Hence the need not to give in to all the demands of our senses, and to strive to strengthen our interior world instead. For it is there that we find Christ.

Today's Gospel passage ends with the people who witnessed the miracle exclaiming: "He has done all things well." We too should grow in our amazement at how our Lord is able to remedy any situation, if we turn to Him with faith.

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