

# focus on sunday

The signs that Jesus is present and that we are his true witnesses is that we attend to our sick, console those who are in despair, befriend the friendless; work for social justice, we must not be mute through fear or self - protection. We must do all things well.



There is much to be discomfited by in today's Gospel. The Deaf community, with its own language and culture, may balk at the presentation of Jesus 'fixing' a person. Many of us might recoil at the image of Jesus putting his fingers into the man's ears and mouth, and using his spittle. Yet the tangibly raw physicality reminds us that our God is not an abstract, sterile entity: our God is one who entered humanity in its entirety, and who continues to minister to the whole person. Sanitary concerns aside, St Mark reaffirms the holistic, hands-on ministry of Jesus, which is an inevitable consequence of the Incarnation, and of the need for us all to 'be opened' to God in every area our lives.

Today's readings all reinforce social justice as an integral component of Christian discipleship. Yet, in the Christian tradition, social justice is not a comfortable philanthropy. It is one which requires us, too, to be hands-on, to get down and dirty in the face of poverty, disadvantage, and abject need. Do we give our whole selves to others? Do we engage with the whole person, even the whole of our own selves, or do we secretly recoil at some aspects? Are our faith communities and our liturgies holistic and respectful of the body? We can take our pastoral-theological cue from both the Gospel and today's First Reading, where all of creation finds joyful liberty in God's healing and abundantly life-giving touch.

Giovanna Feeley, PhD

## Jesus' Story

Fr. Liam Hickey

A little girl asked 'Why does the priest touch the babies two ears at the Baptism celebration?' Her pal answered 'Because we should listen twice as often with two ears, as we speak with one voice.' We are told that Mary Our Mother listened to the Angel, and because she listened, great blessings came to all the world. We ask God and our angel to help us to listen to our parents and our teachers. When we listen to the sounds of nature and song too, we discover blessings.



### ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

You are just, O Lord, and your judgement is right; treat your servant in accord with your merciful love.

### GREETING

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**  
The Lord be with you.  
**And with your spirit.**

### PENITENTIAL ACT

Have mercy on us, O Lord.  
**For we have sinned against you.**  
Show us, O Lord, your mercy.  
**And grant us your salvation.**

May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life.  
**Amen.**

Lord, have mercy. **Lord, have mercy.**  
Christ, have mercy. **Christ, have mercy.**  
Lord, have mercy. **Lord, have mercy.**

### THE GLORIA

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to people of good will. We praise you, we bless you, we adore you, we glorify you, we give you thanks for your great glory, Lord God, heavenly King, O God, almighty Father.  
Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son, Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us;  
you take away the sins of the world, receive our prayer; you are seated at the right hand of the Father, have mercy on us.  
For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. **Amen.**



### OPENING PRAYER

O God, by whom we are redeemed and receive adoption, look graciously upon your beloved sons and daughters, that those who believe in Christ may receive true freedom and an everlasting inheritance. Through our Lord Jesus Christ.....

### LITURGY OF THE WORD

#### FIRST READING *Isaiah 35:4-7*

**A reading from the prophet Isaiah**

Say to all faint hearts, 'Courage! Do not be afraid. 'Look, your God is coming, vengeance is coming, the retribution of God; he is coming to save you.' Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened the ears of the deaf unsealed, then the lame shall leap like a deer and the tongues of the dumb sing for joy; for water gushes in the desert, streams in the wasteland,

the scorched earth becomes a lake, the parched land springs of water.

**The word of the Lord.**  
**Thanks be to God.**

### RESPONSORIAL PSALM

**Ps. 145: 7 - 10**

**R. My soul, give praise to the Lord. or Alleluia!**

1. It is the Lord who keeps faith for ever, who is just to those who are oppressed. It is he who gives bread to the hungry, the Lord, who sets prisoners free. **[R]**
2. It is the Lord who gives sight to the blind, who raises up those who are bowed down, the Lord who loves the just, the Lord, who protects the stranger **[R]**
3. The Lord upholds the widow and orphan but thwarts the path of the wicked. The Lord will reign for ever, Zion's God, from age to age. **[R]**

### SECOND READING *James 2:1-5*

**A reading from the letter of St. James**

My brothers, do not try to combine faith in Jesus Christ, our glorified Lord, with the making of distinctions between classes of people. Now suppose a man comes into your synagogue, beautifully dressed and with a gold ring on, and at the same time a poor man comes in, in shabby clothes, and you take notice of the well-dressed man, and say, 'Come this way to the best seats'; then you tell the poor man, 'Stand over there' or 'You can sit on the floor by my foot-rest.' Can't you see that you have used two different standards in your mind, and turned yourselves into judges, and corrupt judges at that? Listen, my dear brothers: it was those who are poor according to the world that God chose, to be rich in faith and to be the heirs to the kingdom which he promised to those who love him.

**The word of the Lord.**  
**Thanks be to God.**

### GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

**Alleluia, alleluia!**  
**Speak, Lord, your servant is listening: you have the message of eternal life.**  
**Alleluia!**

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

**A reading from the holy Gospel according to Mark**

Returning from the district of Tyre, Jesus went by way of Sidon towards the Sea of Galilee, right through the Decapolis region. And they brought him a deaf man who had an impediment in his speech; and they asked him to lay his hand on him. He took him aside in private, away from the crowd, put his fingers into the man's ears and touched his tongue with spittle. Then looking up to heaven he sighed; and he said to him, 'Ephphatha', that is, 'Be opened.' And his ears were opened, and the ligament of his tongue

was loosened and he spoke clearly. And Jesus ordered them to tell no one about it, but the more he insisted, the more widely they published it. Their admiration was unbounded. 'He has done all things well,' they said, 'he makes the deaf hear and the dumb speak.'

**The Gospel of the Lord.**  
**Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

### NICENE CREED

I believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible. I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages. God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father; through him all things were made. For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven,

*All bow for following three lines:*

and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate, he suffered death and was buried, and rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church. I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. **Amen.**



### LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

Pray brothers and sisters, .....  
**May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands for the praise and glory of his name, for our good and the good of all his holy Church.**

### PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

O God, who give us the gift of true prayer and of peace, graciously grant that through this offering, we may do fitting homage to your divine majesty, and, by partaking of the sacred mystery, we may be faithfully united in mind and heart. Through Christ our Lord.

### EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

The Lord be with you.  
**And with your spirit.**  
Lift up your hearts.  
**We lift them up to the Lord.**  
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. It is right and just.

### SANCTUS

Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts. Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

### AFTER THE CONSECRATION

**The mystery of faith.**  
Save us, Saviour of the world, for by your Cross and Resurrection you have set us free.

### INVITATION TO HOLY COMMUNION

Behold the Lamb of God, .....  
Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.

### COMMUNION ANTIPHON

**Like the deer that yearns for running streams, so my soul is yearning for you, my God; my soul is thirsting for God, the living God.**

### PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Grant that your faithful, O Lord, whom you nourish and endow with life through the food of your Word and heavenly Sacrament, may so benefit from your beloved Son's great gifts that we may merit an eternal share in his life. Who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

### CONCLUDING RITE

The Lord be with you.  
**And with your spirit.**  
May the Lord bless you and keep you. **Amen.**  
May he let his face shine upon you and show you his mercy. **Amen.**  
May he turn his countenance towards you and give you his peace. **Amen.**

And may the blessing of almighty God, the Father, and the Son, ✠ and the Holy Spirit, come down on you and remain with you for ever. **Amen.**

Go in peace. **Thanks be to God..**