

# FAITH FOR SUNDAY

September 8, 2024 Year B

Twenty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time



## OPENING PRAYER

**+In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, Amen**

Father God, thank you for this time with you. May the Holy Spirit be upon me, that I may receive wisdom from your Word, be open to Your holy Will and give glory to You always. Through Christ our Lord, Amen

Our Father + Hail Mary + Glory Be

## LECTIO DIVINA

Invite the Holy Spirit - Read - Reflect - Respond in Prayer - Rest in Silence

### **Gospel: Mark 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."

Jesus heals the man who was unable to hear or speak, and provides instructions once the man is restored. The term 'ephphatha' is Aramaic and highlights an early tradition of its use in the Church. In Roman Catholic tradition, an (optional) ephphatha rite is preserved in the current order of the sacrament of Baptism. Jesus brings both internal and external restoration, opening the ears and mouth. How can we apply this to our own life as we listen to the Word of God?

### **Reading I: Isaiah 35:4-7a**

Thus says the LORD: Say to those whose hearts are frightened: Be strong, fear not! Here is your God, he comes with vindication; with divine recompense he comes to save you. Then will the eyes of the blind be opened, the ears of the deaf be cleared; then will the lame leap like a stag, then the tongue of the mute will sing. Streams will burst forth in the desert, and rivers in the steppe. The burning sands will become pools, and the thirsty ground, springs of water.

Isaiah addresses those "whose hearts are frightened"; for Isaiah, the heart stems from what is in the mind. He calls for healing emotionally the wounded minds by emphasizing God's might and divine recompense. What images does Isaiah use to prove God's abundant resources? Do you have reassurance in your own heart that God can wipe away all reason for doubt and restore faith?

## Notes

## RESPONSORIAL PSALM RESPONSE: Praise the Lord, my soul!

### Reading II: James 2:1-5

My brothers and sisters, show no partiality as you adhere to the faith in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ. For if a man with gold rings and fine clothes comes into your assembly, and a poor person in shabby clothes also comes in, and you pay attention to the one wearing the fine clothes and say, "Sit here, please," while you say to the poor one, "Stand there," or "Sit at my feet," have you not made distinctions among yourselves and become judges with evil designs? Listen, my beloved brothers and sisters. Did not God choose those who are poor in the world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom that he promised to those who love him?

St. James addresses economic inequality and favoritism in the early Church. How does he ask the community to respond to such inequality? Comparable care and attention must be given to all regardless of economic inequality. Why do you believe God chooses the poor to be rich in faith?

### Feast days this week

**SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 8 TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME**

**MONDAY 9 SAINT PETER CLAVER, PRIEST**

**TUESDAY 10 WEEKDAY**

**WEDNESDAY 11 WEEKDAY**

**THURSDAY 12 WEEKDAY**

**FRIDAY 13 SAINT JOHN CHRYSOSTOM, BISHOP AND DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH, MEMORIAL**

**SATURDAY 14 THE EXALTATION OF THE HOLY CROSS**

*reflect*

In what ways has God healed me of my shortcomings?

*pray*

Father God, may I have the grace to always be grateful for the healings taking place in my life. Through Christ our Lord, Amen

*live*

As you hear the Word of God, be open to it and do not be afraid to proclaim it openly.