

Reflection on the Gospel-23rd Sunday in Ordinary Time Year B (Mark 7:31-37)

-Veronica Lawson RSM

Those who are profoundly deaf frequently find themselves on the edge of the human and earth communities. Without access to birdsong, to spoken discourse, to the vast range of media communication, they often struggle to understand and to be understood. Their capacity to communicate their deepest wisdom, their hopes and dreams, their anxieties and fears, is limited not only by personal disability but also by the incomprehension of others.

In our contemporary technological world, sophisticated hearing devices and cochlear implants transform the lives of many who previously suffered from serious hearing loss and its social consequences. Whatever degree of deafness is experienced, relief from such an affliction offers far more than physical healing. It brings insertion into the life of family and community and workplace. It opens up new horizons and unimagined possibilities.

In first century Palestine, the chances of relief from hearing deficiency and associated speech impairment were minimal. Desperate people put their faith in folk healers who used their healing hands and drew upon their knowledge of the medicinal properties in certain herbs and other plants. It seems clear that Jesus was known as an effective healer and that he used some of the same methods as other healers of his time. Many of his contemporaries in that part of the world would have turned to Asclepius, the Greek god of healing, or his daughter Hygeia. Jesus turns, not to Asclepius or Hygeia, but to the God of Israel ("looking up to heaven...") as the source of healing power.

There is layer upon layer of meaning in today's healing story. Habitat features significantly. Jesus travels from Tyre on the northern Mediterranean coast to the Sea of Galilee via the non-Jewish territory on the eastern side of the lake. It was a regular route, but definitely not the most direct one. The gospel writer seems to be stressing the all-embracing nature of Jesus' healing ministry. Land belongs to God and territorial claims on land are no barrier to Jesus' healing ministry, a lesson Jesus himself has just learned from the Syro-Phoenician woman whose story is told in Mark 7:26-30.

As the gospel story has unfolded, we have found that the same healing power of God is available to Jews and Gentiles, to male and female, young and old alike. It is available to those with bodily afflictions and those who are paralysed by anxiety and fear. There is irony in the telling of the story: a Gentile deaf man can be brought from no hearing to hearing, from "speaking with difficulty" to clarity of speech, but Jesus' own disciples will shortly fail to hear and understand, "Do you have ears and not hear?" (Mark 8:18). We open our ears to hear in the hope of understanding.

BULLETIN FOR 23rd SUNDAY in ORDINARY TIME, YEAR B



ST ALIPIUS PARISH, BALLARAT EAST

Including St Peter & Paul's, Buninyong

Parish Address: 84 Victoria Street, Ballarat East. 3350

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MASS TIMETABLE FOR THE WEEK BEGINNING MONDAY, 8th SEPTEMBER 2015

MONDAY:	No Mass
TUESDAY:	No Mass
WEDNESDAY:	11.00 am in Mercy Centre
THURSDAY:	9.30 am in Parish Church
FRIDAY:	9.30 am in Parish Church
SATURDAY:	Sacrament of Reconciliation at 10.00 am

NEXT WEEKEND'S MASSES

ST. ALIPIUS	SAT	6.00 PM
	SUN	10.30 AM
BUNINYONG	SUN	9.00 AM

READINGS - THE 24th SUNDAY in ORDINARY TIME, YEAR B

First:	Isaiah 50:5-9
Second:	James 2:14-18
Gospel:	Mark 8:27-35

RECENT DEATHS: Bill Noonan.

ANNIVERSARIES: John Nolan, Janette Pearse, Max Braybrook.

PLEASE PRAY FOR THE SICK: Nell McGettigan, Pamela Hayes, Anthony Conroy, Nathan Cambell, Karen Hayes, Denise Learmonth, Mary-Rose McLaren, Mona Shillito, Cath Wheelahan, Marinna Lenkic, Barbara Keirl.

COUNTING TEAMS:

This Week: .**Team 12:** E. Kennedy ©, C. Stewart.

Next Week: .**Team 1:** L. Noonan ©, G. Clarkson.



COLLECTIONS LAST WEEKEND:

PARISH:	Envelopes:	\$ 1,217.00
	Loose money:	\$ 300.00
	Direct debits:	\$ <u>160.00</u>
		\$ 1,677.00
PRESBYTERY:		\$ 738.00

EVENTS

- Wednesday, 9th September Social afternoon in the Mercy Centre at 2.00 pm
All welcome.
- Wednesdays **Rosary** in the Chapel of Visitation at St. John of God Hospital at 12.45 pm. All welcome.
- Wednesday afternoons **Legion of Mary** meets at Nazareth House, Mill St. Ballarat, at 1.30 pm. Enquiries: 5332 8624 or 5332 7227.
- **Legion of Mary Prayers:** Prayers of Petition to Mary, Mother of Perpetual Help, will be held at St. Patrick's Cathedral from 11.15 am - 11.45 am on 1st & 3rd Thursdays.

Online diocesan training course about safeguarding children & vulnerable adults

If you have a particular role in the parish, you may be contacted about providing your email address for the purpose of completing an online training course to be distributed by the Diocesan Professional Standards office. The training relates to two diocesan documents: "Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults" and "Code of Conduct for Caring for Children" The training aims to ensure that all those who work with children and persons in positions of responsibility in our parishes have read and understand the documents.

DAMASCUS COLLEGE ENROLMENT INFORMATION

Damascus College warmly invites all families to attend our upcoming Information Evening, on Wednesday, 9th September 5.00 pm. Please arrive at 4.45 pm for registration.

STUDENTS OF ALL AGES ARE WELCOME TO ATTEND

BALLARAT CLERGY SUPPORT FUND

Collection for Sick and Retired Priests

The Ballarat Clergy Support Fund provides for retired priests who have spent a lifetime selflessly caring for others, and who deserve a happy and peaceful retirement. The Fund is currently supporting and caring for eighteen retired priests. Over the next few years a number of priests currently in parish ministry will be moving into retirement, and will also need to be supported by the Fund. This collection has raised nearly \$1.7 million since it began in 1991, including nearly \$67,000 last year. Along with the priests' own contribution of approx. \$40,000, this annual collection has allowed the Fund to continue to support our sick and retired clergy. Last year the contribution from this parish was \$2,170.60. Please give as generously as you can and help us continue "*caring for those who cared for us*". Special envelopes are available in your packs of Stewardship envelopes or on the pews of the church today. They may be handed in today or over the coming weeks. **A credit card facility is available for your convenience, and contributions over \$2.00 are tax-deductible.**
CARING FOR THOSE WHO CARED FOR US—THE CHURCH COMMUNITY'S RESPONSIBILITY.

ST ALIPIUS LITURGY ROSTERS

Are available this weekend near the Piety Stall.

SALE OF EAST TIMOR FABRICS

A representative of the Mercy Sisters will be selling traditional East Timorese fabrics at all Masses this weekend. They have been sent back to Australia by Sister Helen Nolen of this diocese who is establishing kindergartens in villages in East Timor. The village women who weave the fabrics use the proceeds of sale to pay for their children's education. The fabrics come in many sizes and can be used as scarves, table runners or wall hangers. Prices are negotiable. They would make spectacular Christmas presents.

RETREAT WITH FR. BRENDAN MURPHY SDB

Fr. Brendan Murphy SDB will conduct a Retreat at Nazareth House all day on Thursday and Friday and Saturday morning, September 24th, 25th and 26th. He will ask us to consider, "Who are we, Where are we going, and How will we get there?" More details later. To register interest please contact Maureen Van der Linden, ph: 0431 273 953 or email: mojo6163@hotmail.com Catholic Womens' League/ Anima Education.