

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 music and 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 or even the impatience 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 to 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). Let us bury our prejudices and open our ears to hear in the hope that we might come to understand.

23RD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME — YEAR B



ST ALIPIUS PARISH, BALLARAT EAST

Including St Peter & Paul’s, Buninyong
(The Parish of St Alipius, the communities of Ballarat East and Buninyong are committed to the safety, wellbeing and dignity of all children and vulnerable adults.)

Office Hours: Tuesday, Thursday & Friday, 9.30 am—1.30 pm
Parish Address: 84 Victoria Street, Ballarat East 3350
Telephone: 5332 6611
Email: ballarateast@ballarat.catholic.org.au
Parish Website: <http://www.ballarat.catholic.org.au>

MASS TIMETABLE FOR THE WEEK BEGINNING
MONDAY, 10th SEPTEMBER 2018

MONDAY: No Mass
TUESDAY: No Mass
WEDNESDAY: 11.00 am Parish Church
THURSDAY: 11.00 am Mercy Centre
FRIDAY: 11.00 am Mercy Centre

NEXT WEEKEND’S MASSES

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

24TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME—YEAR B

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

RECENT DEATHS: Paul Mahar.

ANNIVERSARIES: Janette Pearse, Mollie Dodd.

PLEASE PRAY FOR THE SICK:

Nathan Cambell, Denise Learmonth, Cath Wheelahan, Kevin Walsh, Peter Clohesy, Frank Nolan (Buninyong), Fiona Dickinson, Carmel Doherty, Aurora Ferrer, Patricia Harman, Leonie Sinnot, John Darroch, Maggie Brown, Margaret Meerbach, Eleanor Keating.

COUNTING TEAMS:

This Week: Team 7: K. Cummins©, J. O'Meara, B. Hood, G. Duck.
Next Week: Team 8: B. McKeegan©, M. Ridsdale, K. McKeegan.

COLLECTIONS LAST WEEKEND:

PARISH:	Envelopes:	\$ 541.90
	Loose:	\$ 150.00
	Direct Debits:	\$ <u>2,235.00</u>
		\$ <u>2,926.90</u>
PRESBYTERY:		\$ 852.00



WELCOME TO BISHOP CONNORS

We warmly welcome back Bishop Peter Connors who will be celebrating masses with us again this weekend. Thank you for your generosity in ministering to us and sharing in our parish life!

PLENARY COUNCIL QUESTIONS — FEEDBACK

Thank you to the 42 parishioners who responded to the two Plenary questions posed a couple of weeks ago—1. *What do you think God is asking of us in Australia at this time?*; and 2. *What questions do you have about the future of the Church for the Plenary Council to consider in 2020?* Common responses included: Living out Gospel values, caring for those in need, greater youth engagement/involvement, and more leadership roles for women in the Church. Please see board at back of church for individual responses together with draft summary of key words/phrases and timelines for the Ballarat Diocese Plenary Gatherings in October. The Gatherings provide an opportunity to hear from and meet Ms Lana Turvey-Collins, Facilitator of the Australian Plenary Council 2020 Preparation Team.
Please keep your thoughts and suggestions coming!

SOCIAL AFTERNOON

Social afternoon will be held on Wednesday 12th September at 2.00pm in the Mercy Centre. Please enter via Gent St. All welcome.

DAMASCUS COLLEGE INFO SESSIONS FOR 2020 ENROLMENT

Interested families and students are warmly invited to attend information evenings on Wed 5th Sep at 5pm, or Thu 25th Oct at 6.30pm. Open Mornings with tours will be held on Thu 13th Sep, 9am – 10.30am, and Thu 1st Nov, 9am -10.30am. Please register your attendance online via the Damascus College website www.damascus.vic.edu.au. Enrolment applications for Year 7 2020 close on Friday 15th Feb 2019.

INVITATION TO PRAY WITH ST ALIPIUS PRIMARY SCHOOL

Parishioners are welcome to join in the Whole School Prayer held every Friday during school terms at 9.00am in the McInerney Centre, St Alipius Parish Primary School.

CHILD PROTECTION SUNDAY - SEPTEMBER 9

Each year the Australian Catholic Church dedicates the Sunday at the end of Child Protection Week as *Child Protection Sunday*. In 2018 the Australian Catholic Church marks Child Safeguarding Sunday on 9 September. Uniquely this year Child Protection Sunday follows on the heels of the formal response of the Australian Catholic Church to the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. Bishop Paul Bird of Ballarat welcomes the publication and *notes* referring to points that relate particularly to the diocese of Ballarat are available at the back of the church. Please note that **Roxanne Leed**, Deputy Principal of St Alipius Primary School, has been appointed as Child Protection Safety Officer for our Parish.

POPE FRANCIS: LETTER TO THE PEOPLE OF GOD

Pope Francis has responded to new reports of clerical sexual abuse and the ecclesial cover-up of abuse. In an impassioned letter addressed to the whole People of God, he calls on the Church to be close to victims in solidarity, and to join in acts of prayer and fasting in penance for such "atrocities". Copies of the full text of the letter are available at the back of the church.

THANK YOU FROM THE ST VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY

We wish to thank the School Communities within our Parish and all parishioners for their support to our recent Winter Appeal. As the need for our services continues to grow we are both grateful for and encouraged by your generosity.

OPENING AND BLESSING OF MERCY PLACE BALLARAT

Parishioners are welcome to attend the official Opening and Blessing of Mercy Place Ballarat that will take place on Wednesday, 26th September at 10.30am. The Chapel will also be commissioned. Address: 60 Corbett Street, Ballarat East.

MERCY PLACE SEEKING VOLUNTEERS

It is great to see residents moving into Mercy Place Ballarat with many familiar faces and names from the East! I have been appointed as Pastoral Carer on the very site where I attended school -- isn't it funny how life can take us full circle sometimes! Starting on 4th October, weekly Mass will be offered each Thursday at 11am at Mercy Place. Please feel welcome to join us for this celebration (enter from Corbett Street). We will be in need of volunteers for all sorts of activities, but especially to support residents in attending this weekly mass – maybe pushing a wheelchair from 10.30am onwards. If you are able to assist, it would be greatly appreciated, however there is some volunteer paperwork to complete which I am happy to assist you with – it won't take long! You can contact me at KCurran@mercy.com.au or ring me on 5327 1888 or 0418 797 538. Kind regards, Kathy Curran (nee Lund).

JOY SPREADING IN BALLARAT

Stacey Atkins is the guest speaker at the next *Joy Spreading* event for young adults (18-30 yo) on Friday, September 14, 2018 from 6.30pm – 9.00pm at the Lake View Hotel, Ballarat. Free event. More info at www.ballarat.catholic.org.au or phone 5337 7125.