

Ears to Hear (Mark 7:31-37)

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Guidelines: Protect confidentiality and follow the leader's prompts

Lectio Divina Rhythms/Process (Repeat three times):

- (a) Read the Scripture passage ("Lectio")
- (b) Reflect on the focus question below ("Meditatio")
- (c) Respond in quiet prayer/journaling ("Oratio")
- (d) Rest in God's invitation for you then pray/share out loud if you want ("Contemplatio")

Introduction: In the spiritual life hearing is everything. Three times in Mark's Gospel Jesus says, "If anyone has ears to hear, let them hear" (Mark 4:9, 23; 7:16). Then, as if to emphasize this point, he heals a man who was deaf and mute. Hearing helps us to relate, learn, experience, and speak well. This is true in both the physical and spiritual worlds. Imagine being this man. You can't hear or speak. Jesus puts his fingers in your ears, spits on your tongue, looks up to heaven, takes a deep breath, and speaks the Aramaic healing word: "Eph-phatha!" Or "Be opened!" It's a word from heaven. It's a word that opens heaven for you!

Opening Prayer: With Jesus touch your ears and pray, "Be opened!" (Mark 7:34)

Read Scripture: Mark 7:31-37 (NIV)

³¹ Then Jesus left the vicinity of Tyre and went through Sidon, down to the Sea of Galilee and into the region of the Decapolis. ³² There some people brought to him a man who was deaf and could hardly talk, and they begged Jesus to place his hand on him.

³³ After he took him aside, away from the crowd, Jesus put his fingers into the man's ears. Then he spit and touched the man's tongue. ³⁴ He looked up to heaven and with a deep sigh said to him, "*Ephphatha!*" (which means "Be opened!"). ³⁵ At this, the man's ears were opened, his tongue was loosened and he began to speak plainly.

³⁶ Jesus commanded them not to tell anyone. But the more he did so, the more they kept talking about it. ³⁷ People were overwhelmed with amazement. "He has done everything well," they said. "He even makes the deaf hear and the mute speak."

1st Reading: What is one word or phrase the Holy Spirit impresses on you? Meditate on that.

2nd Reading: Enter into the Scripture passage. What do you feel? What specific situation in your life today relates? Write down a prayer or pray quietly.

3rd Reading: What is God's personal invitation for you from the Scripture? You can write down what God may be saying to you or a prayer of thanks. Or rest quietly in God.