

**For The Bulletin Of  
September 6, 2015**

**THE 23<sup>RD</sup> SUNDAY IN  
ORDINARY TIME**

*From Father Robert*

In today's gospel Jesus opens the ears and loosens the tongue of the deaf mute. Both he and the crowd cannot contain themselves, but proclaim what Jesus has done. What has Jesus really done? Healed the man? Yes, but more. Jesus was revealed that He is far more than a miracle worker, as fascinating and wonderful as that may be. Understood only as an external sign, however, the miracle falls short of the reality. The miracles Jesus performs reveal His own divine power, His own compassion for the human condition, His own mission. Jesus cares for each of us, cares enough to reach out and touch us! What must be proclaimed is not the sign itself, but that to which it points: God's presence bringing salvation. Faced with this revelation, no one can keep silent. The Word grants the power of word. We surmise that something very profound must have happened between Jesus and the deaf man even before the miracle that brought the deaf and mute man to an intensified insight about Jesus. Jesus must have communicated something to him that resonated deep within the man's very being and changed him. This is why he could not help but proclaim the miracle – his encounter with Jesus changed him. He was able to see beyond the miracle to the wholeness (salvation) Jesus offered him.

The crowd recognized that Jesus is the fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy when they say, "He has done all things well.

He makes the deaf hear and the mute speak." Jesus' miracle points beyond Himself as a miracle worker to Himself as the One Who has come to save us. The miracles are a sign of salvation – God's new Life is breaking in on humanity and changing who we are and giving us a whole new insight into our relationship with God. We now see God's mighty deeds, now Jesus is our savior, and proclaim God's salvation. This Good News cannot be contained.

Jesus is very personal with the man He heals: He touches his ears and tongue, He prays to His Father with a groan, as if His whole being were involved. How much Jesus wishes to touch us, heal us, encounter us! Like the healed man and crowd in the gospel, we cannot keep quiet, either. Encounter with Jesus leads to our proclaiming His nearness, His care, His healing. We are never alone. We only need to open ourselves to Jesus' touch. We only need to open ourselves to the Word Who grants us all power to proclaim His nearness to the whole world.

*Living The Paschal Mystery*

In terms of Christian discipleship, we must come to know Jesus before we can proclaim Who He is. Looking to mighty deeds that we think may be unfolding around us today – reports of miracles, etc. – is not where this gospel leads us. Rather, the gospel leads us to see Christ in the little things around us – the caring touch, the encouraging smile, the unexpected friendly phone call – and interpret these as evidence of God's Presence and salvation. We ought to be "astonished" today by the many manifestations of God's Presence in and through the people around us. We ought to be astonished at how God uses us as

instruments to proclaim the Good News of salvation. We ought to be so keyed into Jesus' Presence that we, too, cannot contain ourselves, but must proclaim God's mighty deeds to anyone who has ears to hear.

How have you been touched by the words of our scriptures today?

- I have been tongue-tied and silent when...Jesus, the Word, has given me courage to proclaim...
- I have experienced Jesus' divine power and compassion coursing through me when...
- I am compelled to proclaim Jesus' mission to...

***About Liturgy: Lectors, Assembly, and Proclamation of the Word***

Proclamation involves more than just speaking and hearing. True proclamation demands a commitment of self on the part of both Lector and assembly that is evident in the way one lives. This is why being a lector is much more than being a good reader. One might read flawlessly, but the word would not necessarily be proclamation. True proclamation comes from the lived experience of the lector (the individual has already lived God's word during the week before proclamation) and rings so true that it moves the assembly to live the word as well. In other words, proclamation demands something of the proclaimer and something of the hearer. If either is lacking, then the proclamation is lacking.

Good proclamation requires living what we might call a "spirituality of the word." This means that one isn't a lector just on the Sunday when one proclaims, but is as lector every moment

of every day. It also means that the assembly is called to live the word proclaimed as well. Proclamation of God's word becomes a way of life that is evident in the way one speaks in ordinary daily living (kind, uplifting words; no profanity; encouragement and challenge; etc.). A spirituality of the word would also be characterized by one who spends extra time with God's word – the Bible or Lectionary – perhaps reading a few verses each day and keeping them in mind while one goes about the day. In this way, God's word becomes so familiar as to become the very words of the individual.

***Stand Down On the Delta***

This is the weekend that you have been invited to bring t-shirts, boxers/briefs, and black & white crew socks for both men and women, sizes Small to Extra Large for our homeless women and men veterans in anticipation of the Stand Down on the Delta which takes place beginning this Friday, September 11<sup>th</sup> through Monday, September 14<sup>th</sup>. We are blessed to have the YLI, Catholic Daughters of the Americas, our Knights of Columbus, and our CCISCO partner congregations share in this event with us. Thank you to all those who have responded so generously.

***Congratulations To The Reverend Dr. Mario H. Howell***

This coming Friday evening, September 11<sup>th</sup>, at 7:30 p.m., I have been invited to join the congregation of Antioch Church Family in honoring **The Reverend Dr. Mario H. Howell, Pastor of Antioch Church Family, and First Lady, Joyce Howell**, on the occasion of his 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary as Pastor. Dr. Howell is the longest tenured Pastor of all the clergy serving Antioch. He has been vitally

involved in our community and a fearless advocate for social justice for all oppressed and marginalized peoples. Dr. Howell has become a dear friend and colleague and has joined us each year for our Ecumenical Good Friday Service. You are welcome to join me for this well-deserved evening of recognition, appreciation, and celebration. If you are unable to attend, please feel free to send him an anniversary card of appreciation for his twenty years of ministry to his congregation as well as to the people of East County.

### ***Adult Faith Formation – “The Rites to Die Right!”***

Once again, I will be presenting an Adult Faith Formation program/seminar on “The Rites to Die Right.” It will take place on Wednesday evening, September 23<sup>rd</sup>, from 7:30 to 9:00 p.m. in the parish hall. There is no cost to attend.

The session will focus on the church’s pastoral care of the sick, it’s presence at the time of death, related rites, and the three principal movements of the Order of Christian Funerals: The Vigil, Funeral Liturgy, and Committal. Issues around cremation and disposition will also be addressed. You will not want to miss this informative and entertaining workshop.

For those of you who may not be aware, I am also a Licensed Funeral Director in the State of California, License No. #1598, and am able to bring a unique perspective to the issue of selecting a mortuary/funeral home/cremation society to serve you at the time of the death of a loved one. Please mark your calendars accordingly and plan to attend.

### ***Concert Series***

The next in the series of concerts takes place on Friday evening, September 18<sup>th</sup>, at 8:00 p.m. You will not want to miss this extraordinary performance of great works for both organ and brass. The concert is FREE, however, there will be a free-will offering to help defray the costs of the reception as well as to provide a stipend for the brass players. A reception will follow in the parish hall during which you will have the opportunity to meet the instrumentalists and **Don Pearson, Director of Music/Organist/Artist-in-Residence.**

### ***Liturgical Ministry Faire***

On the weekend of September 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>, we will once again have our annual Liturgical Ministries Faire. This is the day when you are invited to sign up and participate in the various liturgical ministries that are such a vital part of our worship life: Lectors, Eucharistic Ministers, Ushers, Greeters, Choir members, Instrumentalists, Sacristans, Art & Environment Committee, Liturgy Committee, Altar Servers, and Adult Acolytes. Representatives from each ministry will be available after each liturgy to distribute information as well as to assist you with signing up for a particular ministry. Please begin to pray and discern if God is calling you to anyone of the above listed ministries. Training is provided for all ministries. This is a great way to become more involved in the parish and also an excellent way to demonstrate two very important aspects of Stewardship: Time and Talent.

### ***Fr. George Griener, S.J. Returns***

This past week **Fr. Griener** and I were in touch with one another and he will be returning to the parish to share in the

presiding and preaching at least once a month, beginning the weekend of September 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>. We are truly blessed to have Fr. George as a part of our rotation and I know how much all of you appreciate his presence along with his powerful preaching.

***The Gala Dinner and Parish Feast Day and Festival***

Excitement is already building towards our annual Gala Dinner, the Parish Feast Day, and Parish Festival the weekend of October 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>. Last weekend, the members of the Grand Raffle Committee presented this year's theme, "A Walk on the Wild Side" and Grand Raffle tickets were distributed. Tickets continue to be available both before and after liturgies in the Gathering Plaza or from the Parish Office during the week. Thank you for your support and generosity in helping us to make this the most successful fund raiser ever. If each family participates, we will shatter all previous records. The funds raised go into the General Operating Fund and sustain the parish through the Fall to Christmas and into the New Year.

***Thank You***

...to our wonderful volunteers who clean the church and parish hall each week:

**Nancy Santos, Angela Bueno, Delmy Williams, Rose Salamanca, Reno Benasfre, Jun Bajet, and Steve Rojek.**

...to our wonderful volunteers who maintain and clean our bathrooms in both the church and parish hall throughout the week: **Robert**

**Goncalves, Mary Ewing, Gino Ramos, Geri Abaya, and Harlan Young.**

...to our bulletin stuffers, collection counters, Sacristans for both daily and weekend liturgies.

