

**For The Bulletin Of  
September 9, 2018**



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

*From Father Robert*

Have you ever seen odd behavior from someone you knew, or rather, thought you knew? People, even close friends, can surprise us sometimes with their actions. Today we hear about a frankly odd miracle story that occurs only in the Gospel of Mark. Matthew and Luke, who used Mark as a resource for the writing of their gospels, apparently thought they had other miracle stories they could tell that would make the same point without repeating this one. And the Gospel of John tells us only seven “signs” that Jesus performed, and this is not one of them.

Upon reading this unique Markan story, I often imagine the episode and how it might be portrayed in artwork. Can we imagine Jesus putting His finger in another person’s ear? Or Jesus spitting and touching the person’s tongue, groaning in a foreign language? Even so, that’s precisely what the gospel tells

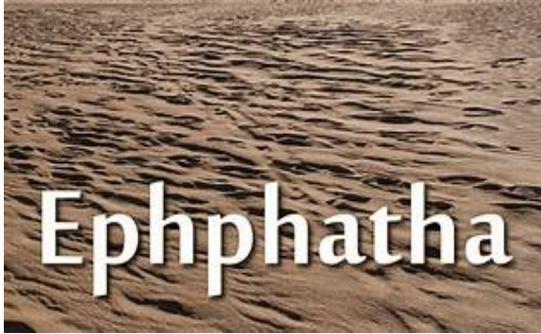
us happened. And the Aramaic term preserved in the Greek New Testament, *Ephphatha*, is in the imperative singular form and clearly means, “Be opened!”

Perhaps we are not surprised to hear that in the early centuries after Jesus’ death and resurrection many thought of Him as a magician. Even in the Acts of the Apostles, when the disciples heal in Jesus’ name, Simon Magus offers them money so he can do the same. Or some early Christian sarcophagi (burial chambers) Jesus is at times portrayed with a magic wand. We might excuse some of the crowds for thinking that Jesus had magic powers as it seems some later Christians did too!

But Jesus was not a magician. His mighty deeds were ushering in the Kingdom of God. His actions were being done “by the finger of God” rather than by a magic wand. Jesus was more than a wonder-worker, though He definitely worked wonders.

The mighty deeds of Jesus were about restoration, healing, and wholeness. Those on the margins, those outcast, and those who were relegated to a kind of second-class citizenship on account of physical ailments were healed, made whole, and thereby restored to the community.

And as so often happens in the Gospel of Mark, Jesus orders those he heals not to tell anyone about it, but to no avail. Something so astonishing could not be kept under wraps. Almost like children, the more He told them not to, the more they proclaimed it. That is true evangelical zeal!



***Living The Paschal Mystery***

We might not witness such dramatic deeds as the deaf hearing, or the mute speaking, but we witness God’s activity in the world on a daily basis. We can participate in the activity of Jesus by bringing in the excluded, reaching out to those on the margins, and empathizing with those who have less. Each time we go outside of ourselves to deal with the needs of another person, we are acting as “another Christ.” By virtue of our baptism that is our vocation, to be another Christ on earth, ministering to those in need wherever and whenever we find them. Figuratively, and literally, we can help to give voice to the voiceless, and assist those who cannot hear to hear. The voiceless might not be a mute, but instead the marginalized without access to the microphone of public debate. Those who cannot hear might not be the deaf, but those who are figuratively deaf to the injustice in our world. As another Christ, it is our duty as baptized Christians to enact God’s kingdom on earth. Today we are given a model for doing that. When we do so, our behavior might be thought of as odd, but it is nevertheless our calling and our vocation.

How are today’s scripture passages challenging you personally?

- In what ways can we be “deaf” to the love of God?

- When have you been especially blessed by another person’s gift of listening?
- What attitudes, situations, troubles in your life would you ask Jesus to “release” you from?
- Who are among the most difficult to welcome into our lives? Who are those among us most often forgotten or ignored, if not out-and-out rejected? How can we create a place of welcome to them within our parish community?



The Floral Arrangement at the Altar today is placed to The Glory of God and In Loving Memory of **Bill Duarte from his beloved wife, Betty, his son, Gary, and grandson, Andrew.**



As announced last week, today we have the privilege of joining our sisters and brothers throughout the Diocese in supporting our retired priests. There are currently more than 50 retired priests in our Diocese and within the next 5 years,

another 20 will retire. This is our opportunity to express our gratitude for their ministry, many for more than 40 or 50 years. The collection is especially personal to our parish given that we have Father “Moses” with us and that you also have welcomed Fr. Vincent Scott, both of whom are retired. I thank you for what you will do to honor them as well as the other retired priests of our Diocese.



***A Service of Apology, Reparation, and Repentance***

At the request of The Bishop, we will be offering A Service of Apology, Reparation, and Repentance this coming Friday, September 14<sup>th</sup>, at 7:30 p.m. in response to the latest scandal and institutional crisis in our church. The service will take the form of Sung Evening Prayer and include the singing of the Penitential Psalms, A Litany of Reparation and Repentance, Scripture, Homily, seeking God’s forgiveness for the failure of church leadership and apologizing for their behavior that has brought such pain, confusion, hurt, and suffering to our Catholic Community and beyond. I hope you will join us for this special time of prayer and healing.

***Disturbance At The Vigil Eucharist***

Last Saturday afternoon, the Vigil Eucharist was disrupted by an individual who stood up as I began the announcements and began yelling “Pope

Francis must resign!” As he moved across the back aisle, our ushers, two retired police officers, and our Knights of Columbus went to him and began to remove him from the church. This happened as I was about to give the 60<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary Blessing to Ray and Lillian DuPeer. It was very upsetting to members of the congregation and I would also say frightening. Our men did an outstanding job of removing this person from the church. It is a Misdemeanor to disrupt any worship service of any denomination. Our Grand Knight, Tim Cox, sent out an email to all our Knights following the Vigil to notify them of what happened and they came prepared on Sunday morning should another such occurrence take place. Fortunately, no such incident happened. The current crisis in our church and most especially the inappropriate letter of Archbishop Vignano and others of his ilk who have attacked Pope Francis are responsible for this and other such incidents that have happened in other parishes as well. We will do everything in our power to be aware of people we do not know coming into the church and monitoring their behavior in order to protect you from any further disturbance. I have spoken with Antioch Police and have alerted them to what happened and they have reassured me of their timely response should something like this happen again.



The grass areas on either side of the Gathering Plaza have become a fitting memorial for the 9/11 observance. I am deeply grateful to those parishioners who placed flags and prepared the poster. The entire cost of this commemoration was paid for by a parishioner who wishes to remain anonymous. Each flag honors the life of a first responder from the New York Police Department, the New York Fire Department, or the Transit Authority of New York who paid the ultimate sacrifice that day. The memorial will remain in place through next Wednesday. You are invited to visit it sometime over the next few days and offer a prayer on behalf of all the victims of this tragic event. During the week, the gates are open each day until 12:30 p.m.

**THANK YOU**  
**Volunteers!**  
We couldn't do it without you

...to those who arrive early each Saturday morning to clean and prepare the church and parish hall for the weekend: **Alfred Madoshi, Pat Kramer, Mency Osborne, Angela Bueno, Jean Rogers, and Carole Miller.**

...to those who clean and maintain our bathrooms throughout the week: **Steve**

**Rojek, Mary Ewing, Patricia Britton, Maria Chandler, Harlan Young and Father Robert.**

...to **Dilcia Aparacio** who does such an excellent job of washing, ironing, and caring for the Sacred Linens.

...to our Sacristans and Altar Guild who prepare the sanctuary for the celebration of Eucharist each week:

**Peter Degl'Innocenti, Pam and Rich Confetti, Vincent Rodriguez, Harlan Young, Monika Kauer, Cynthia Enrique, Nancy Santos and Rose Salamanca.**

...to **our counting teams** who are here every week to count the weekly collections.

...to our volunteers who assisted in the parish office last week:

**Jeannine Ford, Melodye Costanza, Yvette Young, Sharon Cissell, Harlan Young, Joe Fanfa and Bev Iacona.**

...to our St. Vincent de Paul and Mobile Mall volunteers who transported last week's donations: **Frank Zamora and Barbara Jackson.**

...to our faithful weekly bulletin assembly team: **Dave Costanza (Lead), Carole Miller, Kathy Augusta, Vince Augusta and Sherry Webb.**

...to our wonderful Parking Lot Security who keep watch over our vehicles during the weekend liturgies:

**Don Benson, Steve Rojek and Dave Simpson.**



### ***A New Restaurant Comes To Town***

For the past two weeks, a number of people have asked me if I have been to “Smith’s Landing” yet. I had the opportunity to visit it last week and what a wonderful experience it was! We’ve been waiting a long time for a restaurant of this quality in Antioch. As I walked up the steps to the front door of the former “Humphrey’s On The Delta,” the beautiful large glass doors opened and there to greet me was our very own **Madison Stahl** who is the Evening Hostess. Embraced with a big hug and smile, she led me inside the remodeled and renovated restaurant. The new interior is a dramatic change from the former Humphrey’s: beautifully appointed, soft colors, individual lighting over each table, white linen tablecloths, hammered sterling flatware, engraved wine glasses, impeccable wait service, and unparalleled cuisine. The menu offers a variety of fresh fish dishes as well as pastas and choice meats, small plates, appetizers, and desserts along with a wine selection of both imported and domestic wines. Our waiter, Christopher, could not have been better in caring for our table, attending to our every need and yet never being too present. The serving of each course was perfectly paced and not rushed. We were there on a Wednesday evening and the restaurant was filled to capacity. While we were not able to have a table

at the window along the river, our area of dining was comfortable and the tables spaced in such a way that we didn’t feel crowded or too close to the other guests. There were also other parishioners present near us who were celebrating a birthday and also enjoyed a wonderful dining experience. At one point, both the Manager and Assistant Manager approached our table to introduce themselves to welcome us and to make sure our dining experience was everything we hoped it would be. We had begun with a delicious Crab/Spinach/Artichoke Heart Dip with perfectly grilled bruschetta, followed by an excellent Clam Chowder. Our main course was Grilled Scallops on a bed of blue corn risotto – the scallops were perfectly grilled and the risotto could not have been a more wonderful complement. Dessert consisted of a woven basket made from caramel and filled with fresh berries, French Vanilla Ice Cream, and topped with Whipping Cream – outstanding! This was gourmet dining at its best! I look forward to returning soon and trying other selections on the menu. And the wine: a spectacular “Albarino” from Italy that finished with notes of apple, pear, and melon – heavenly! Reservations are recommended, especially if you want a table at the windows along the river. Regardless, this is nothing short of a “Five Star” dining experience. I sense that this is going to be a very successful and popular restaurant for many years to come.