

Our Lady of Victory Church

1607 Birch Street, Whitehorse YT, Y1A 3X1 Ph: 867-633-2647

Bishop: Most Reverend Héctor Vila, DD; **Pastor:** Fr. Marc Lalonde

Associate Pastor: Padre Ain Leetma 867-336-0527. Reconciliation: 30 minutes before Mass.

Mass Times: 1st Mass of Sunday: Saturday @ 7.00 pm. Sunday @ 10.15 am. Monday – Friday @ 6.00 pm
Monday: Perpetual Novena to Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal, Rosary, and Adoration; after Mass

Our Lady of Victory parish is part of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Whitehorse, Canada

OLOV Parish Council:

Chair: Joe Hanrath, **Secretary:** Carol Vanderbyl, **Treasurer:** vacant,

Council Members: Frank Hanrath, Pat Banks, Brian McGovern.

Meetings will now be 2nd Tuesday @ 1.30 pm. **Next meeting:** September 11

Finance Committee: Fr. Marc Lalonde, Pat Banks, Brian McGovern, vacant;

Music: Saturday, vacant; Sunday, Pauline Paton; **Liturgy:** Pat Banks; **Food Bank:** Kristie Canary

September 9, 2018: 23rd Sunday in Ordinary Time



**'Be
opened.'**

Mark 7. 34

Father Karban's Essay for September 9nd, 2018: Twenty-third Sunday of the Year

[Isaiah 35:4-7a](#); [James 2:1-5](#); [Mark 7:31-37](#)

Counter to popular wisdom, gospel miracles aren't supposed to prove Jesus is God; the evangelists provided them to us to convince us what kind of a God he is. If the communities for whom the gospels were originally written weren't already convinced this unique Palestinian carpenter was God, they wouldn't be reading the gospels in the first place. Just because someone believes in God, he or she might not believe in the kind of God the gospel Jesus of Nazareth proclaimed. There are all sorts of images of God.

For instance, during the movie *Silver Linings Playbook* the Bradley Cooper character throws his copy of Hemingway's *A Farewell to Arms* through his closed bedroom window, abruptly waking up his parents and the neighbors in the middle of the night. Like so many other people reaching the end of this famous book, Cooper doesn't agree with the vengeful, destructive concept of God Hemingway provides. He wasn't expecting that kind of ending based on the God he'd heard preached in church.

This "God-imaging" thing goes beyond gospels. First-Isaiah engages in it in today's first reading. Unlike Jeremiah, who at one point refers to Yahweh as a wadi – a dangerous, undependable stream of water – Isaiah has only good things to say about God in this passage. She/he vindicates our cause, offers salvation, gives sight to the blind, ears to the deaf, new legs to the lame and provides us with constant, life-giving water. Certainly, a person you'd always like to have around.

Mark's Jesus continues with part of that imagery in our gospel pericope by restoring sound and speech to the handicapped man he encounters "in the district of the Decapolis." Notice how often all the evangelists paint a picture of Jesus curing a deaf or blind person. They seem to revel in reminding their readers that they follow a Jesus who helps us see and hear things which others never notice. For people of faith, seeing and hearing is now on a different level.

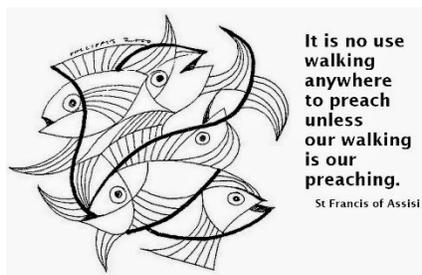
This is especially the case in our James passage. The author demands we look at the poor through the eyes of the person we're trying to imitate. No longer do we notice just a person "in shabby clothes." We now see someone "rich in faith and an heir of the kingdom." Though we normally zero in on a rich person's "gold rings and fine clothes," and give him/her a place of honor at the community's gatherings, people of faith no longer classify people based on those distinctions.

This reminds me of a well-known Thomas Merton quote I recently posted on my Facebook page: "Our job is to love others without stopping to inquire whether or not they are worthy." After reading it, one of my "friends" reminded me that Pope Francis has said something similar. "When we encounter a beggar, it's our place to give generously; it's their place to spend it wisely."

Whether we like to admit it or not, in the gospels we encounter a God in Jesus of Nazareth who often reminded his followers that the God he follows causes it to rain on good people and bad people alike. If we had our druthers, we'd most probably reward the good and punish the bad. Why should we give bad people good things?

It takes Christians like Francis, Merton and James to remind us that we often find a different image of God in the book we employ during our liturgies. If we weren't taught in our grade school catechism classes that "desecrating" holy objects is a sacrilege, I presume a lot of our homes would have battered bibles in their front yards, and broken windows in their upstairs bedrooms. Maybe Bradley Cooper wasn't that far off.

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Michel DeVerteuil, *Lectio Divina with the Sunday Gospels.* www.columba.ie

We are given the context of today's story: it took place as Jesus was "returning from the district of Tyre". He was passing "by way of Sidon towards the Sea of Galilee" and this brought him "right through the Decapolis region". This reminds us that we must know how to leave our ordinary surroundings so that we can meet people like this man.

Today's gospel passage is a healing story. We must be careful to interpret these stories correctly. For example, we would be wrong to draw the conclusion that since Jesus healed miraculously, all his followers are called to do the same. That would be to misunderstand the meaning of the miracles.

St John gives us the key to interpret Jesus' miracles. Whereas the other evangelists refer to the miracles as "wonders" or "powers", John calls them "signs"; for him the miracles point beyond themselves to the "kingdom of God". This is the world as God wills it to be. It is what Jesus lived and died for. The miracles therefore are living lessons on the kingdom. They are also signs that the kingdom is already present in the world. We can see fleeting glimpses of it, its first fruits, its heralds.

Jesus' miracles are like the educational films made nowadays which show the processes of nature speeded up. They are "fast forwarded". For example, we see in one continuous movement a seed germinate, become a bud then a beautiful flower, and then spread new seeds. In somewhat the same way, Jesus' miracles display (and announce the arrival of) God's plan for the world. They "go against nature" but only in the sense that in them God's kingdom comes instantaneously, whereas in real life it takes considerable time and plenty of painful effort.

The person in this story can neither hear nor speak and is therefore a truly touching symbol of those who cannot communicate. They cannot hear God's word of truth, wisdom and consolation, the words of those who would like to enter into communication with them. They cannot hear the life-giving words spoken by nature, the truth of themselves, the greatness or the weakness of their own beings.

The "impediment" in his speech symbolizes well our inability to initiate conversation – with God, other human beings, nature, oneself. The phrase "the ligaments of his tongue were loosened" tells us that the power to communicate is within us all. It is kept in check by the negative forces within us, like fear, hurt and anger. "He spoke clearly" is also a very telling phrase – it refers to the great wonder of good communication, a power we have within us, if we can only do it right.

Jesus takes the man "aside in private". This is surely an indication that his healing often requires intimacy. When we try to do it publicly, we run the risk of using persons to bolster our ego or for our personal ambition.

The healing process in this story is very physical. Jesus "puts his fingers into the man's ears" and "touches his tongue with spittle". This reminds us that the meeting of bodies is very important in the ministry of healing. Jesus also "sighs"; this is telling us that he takes on himself the pain of the man. He "looks up to heaven" – a sign that he knows the source of his healing power is there. It is also a sign of a deep respect before the person's vulnerability.

The passage concludes with one of the several stories of Jesus imposing what biblical scholars have called the "messianic secret." At present, scholars are divided on the issue. Some think of the deep significance of this mysterious aspect of Jesus' ministry, a meaning which is always manifested slowly. We need to enter into this mystery as we can.

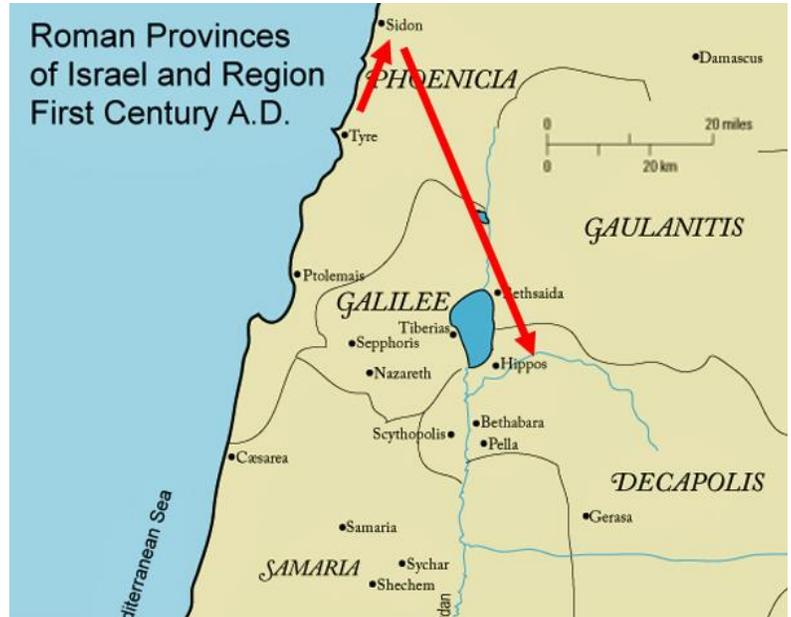
My own feeling however is different. I take it to mean that the "secret" of Jesus reminds us that as always we must interpret the story of Jesus from our own experience. Jesus is then the model of those who choose to minister from the truth of who they are. He does not start from the false idea of what status society finally confers on them.

The text brings out the important aspect of what Jesus really achieved. It notes that the people "published widely" what he had achieved; their "admiration was unbounded". It then adds, "He has done all things well", and specifies further, "he makes the deaf hear and the dumb speak."

This is always Jesus' point of view. He is always there to help people, to make sure that the deaf hear and the dumb speak. Those who had little or no capacity for communication are now able to speak clearly.

From Tyre to Galilee via Sidon

In this Sunday's short Gospel reading from Mark he again tells much in a few lines. He also gives more information than Matthew. Mark says that Jesus left Tyre and traveled toward the Sea of Galilee in the cluster of 10 Greek cities known as the Decapolis region, but he went by way of Sidon. Tyre and Sidon are in the area North of what we now call the land of Israel, and into what we know as southern Lebanon and now under Israeli occupation, but in 1st century AD they were both affluent Mediterranean seaports. All of the area was mainly Greek, Gentile territory and as such the people were considered pagan. On a smaller scale, this journey in some ways resembles Moses leading the Israelites on a convoluted journey in the desert. Moses took 40 years to make a trip that anyone on a bicycle could have done in



two days if they went straight from point A to point B. Did Jesus and Moses both leave home without their GPS? Why does Mark stress this detour through Sidon when the route seems to make no geographical sense? Is Mark making a theological point that Jesus is no longer speaking solely with the Jewish people and including Gentiles or is there another reason? We need to put this journey and subsequent miracle in the context of the time and location. Sidon is 15-20 miles north of Tyre, but the direct route between Tyre and the Sea of Galilee means climbing 4,000 ft Mt Heron, and there is a pass from Sidon through the mountains to the Jordan river valley where foot travelers to Galilee could have fresh water for the journey.

With Mark we have seen people cured of many different types of illness: paralysis, fever, possessed by demons, and even death with Jairus' daughter. In this case the man brought before Jesus is both deaf and mute and the crowd ask him to lay his hands on the man. Jesus could easily cure the man by a laying on of hands and a blessing, but he takes the man away from the crowd and uses personal touch; Jesus puts his fingers in his ears and does something that would be objectionable to most of us: he touched the man's tongue with his saliva. Then Jesus looks to Heaven and commands 'Be opened' in Aramaic. Immediately the man could hear and speak. This is a powerful miracle; sign language hadn't been invented and there were not the mechanical aids we have today so the man had no way of communicating and was literally cut off from society. Suddenly he could hear and speak. He had never heard any language, he had never moved his tongue to speak but immediately his muscles work and he knows how to speak, not just making random noises, but actually speaking in language he had never heard or learned. The people recognise that the old Testament prophecies are being fulfilled in Jesus. The area where God sent Elijah when the widow fed him was between Tyre and Sidon; God specifically mentioned these cities as part of the Promised Land. In the New Testament, Jesus and Paul took the time to minister to the people of these cities. Not Israelite by population and pagan by religious practice, but God continued to bring to them a witness of His love and power.

When we look at the Old Testament from Isaiah we read of the prophecy behind this miracle. Isaiah tells of the new exodus. It won't be Moses sent to carry it out, but God himself and in that prophecy one of the ways of knowing that the new exodus has come is that God is going to perform certain miracles, which include making the deaf to hear and the tongue of the mute sing for joy. Jesus is deliberately enacting in his own person the miracles that Isaiah said God would perform at the time of the new exodus. So the healing of the man who was deaf and mute isn't just a revelation of Jesus' messianic identity, it isn't just a sign that the age of salvation has come, it is also a revelation of the divinity of Jesus; a revelation of the fact that what the Old Testament says God would do, Jesus now does himself, as an implicit revelation of the fact that he's not just the Messiah, he is the God of Israel who has come in person to set in motion a new exodus and to save his people. Considering the route Jesus took through the mountains with fresh water available, is this also in fulfillment of the mention in Isaiah of the waters, streams and springs?

The Pope's Prayer Intention for September: Young People in Africa

That young people in Africa may have access to education and work in their own countries.

Pope's Video for September: Youth in Africa, posted by Fons Eppink mhm, 5th September 2018

The theme of Pope Francis' video this month, is young people in Africa.

Pope Francis says: "Africa is a continent with enormous potential. Its young people are its future. A future which, if it is accompanied by education and work possibilities, is splendid.

"Africa is a wealthy continent, and its greatest, most valuable resource is its young people.

They should be able to choose between letting themselves be overcome by difficulty or transforming the difficulty into an opportunity.

The most effective way to help them in this choice is to invest in their education.

If young people don't have the possibility of education, what future can they have?

If young people don't have a job, what future awaits them?

Let us pray that young people in Africa may have access to education and work in their own countries"

View Pope's September video here:

<https://millhillmissionaries.co.uk/pope-video-for-september-youth-in-africa/>

Sept is the month of creation; Gerard Manley Hopkins SJ helps us to experience the beauty of God in a retreat on the poetry of Gerald Manly Hopkins:

<https://soundcloud.com/pray-as-you-go/sets/gods-grandeur>

A series of ten reflections based on the poetry of Gerard Manley Hopkins, encouraging listeners to engage with his work in a prayerful way, that enables you to connect poetry, prayer, and daily life. 10 retreat sessions of <8 mins each.

Thursday, 13 September: Saint John Chrysostom, Bishop, Doctor

Friday 14 September: The Exaltation of the Holy Cross feast

Saturday 15 September: Our Lady of Sorrows

If you have a loved one that you would like on the prayer list or a Mass Intention published in the newsletter please contact Pat, preferably by Friday morning although last minute edits are possible.





From Bishop Vila's office:

Daughters of St. Paul Book Fair - A Catholic book fair will be held at *Sacred Heart Cathedral* and at *Our Lady of Victory Parish* in Whitehorse on Saturday and Sunday, September 22nd & 23rd, 2018 after each mass. Come browse the display and meet Sr. Carly and Sr. Danielle. The Pauline sisters will also be holding book fairs at our three Catholic schools from September 19th to 21st. For more info about this ministry, visit www.pauline.org Poster attached

Local News and Events

- **New: Hospice Yukon** is offering a three-session Grief Discussion Group this Fall for those grieving the loss of a loved one. Participants can explore their unique loss, find support from the group, and learn a new approach to grieving. Wed, Oct 17, 24 & Nov 1, 7 – 9 pm
Two Hospice facilitators will lead the discussion each week, and base the discussion themes on topics from *The Wilderness of Grief*. Multiple copies of this short book by Alan Wolfelt are available in the Hospice lending library. To register & for more information, phone 667-7429. www.hospiceyukon.net

- Hospice Yukon** is hosting a Walking Group, starting Monday September 10th for those grieving the loss of a loved one.
 Find companionship with others who are grieving, and enjoy time in nature. Hospice volunteers lead the group and share tips for healthy grieving and healing, as well as refreshments after the walk.
 Mondays September 10 to October 1
 To register or find out more: 667-7429 info@hospiceyukon.net Please share with others.
- CEAY AGM NOTICE:** The AGM for the Joint Catholic School Councils and for CEAY (Catholic Education Association of Yukon) will be held on Thursday Sept. 20, at Vanier Catholic Secondary School starting at 7:00 pm. For information contact ceayukon@gmail.com
- Catechesis of the Good Shepherd:** Catechesis of the Good Shepherd (CGS) is a program of Christian formation for children. Our Good Shepherd atrium is located in Our Lady of Guadalupe House at 504 Cook Street. An atrium is a sacred space designed for children, where they can grow in their knowledge of Jesus and His love. The children work with materials that represent the essence of the Christian message. CGS began in Rome in 1954 and has since spread internationally.
 Our first session this fall will be on Saturday September 15. This year we will be offering both level one and level two.
 Level One is for children three years old to kindergarten age. The sessions will be on Saturdays from 11:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
 Level Two is for children in grades one, two and three. The sessions will be on Saturdays from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m.
 Registration forms are attached & available at both Sacred Heart Cathedral and Our Lady of Victory. Please register as soon as possible as space will be limited.
 For further information, contact Monica Best @333-6751 or Caroline Knickle@334-6851. Information is also available online at the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd Association Canada website at www.cgsac.ca.
- Our Lady of Victory, Parish Outreach Initiative:** Food of the Month for Whitehorse Food Bank. The **September** selection from Whitehorse Food Bank's list of needed items is: **Mac/Cheese or dry pasta**. A tote is at the back of the church for those who wish to donate. The donations from our small parish have been amazing, **thank you** to all from the Food Bank clients.
- Rachel's Vineyard Whitehorse:** Rachel's Vineyard Whitehorse is part of an international organization which offers a safe place to renew, rebuild and redeem hearts broken by abortion through weekend retreats. If you think that you might be interested in becoming part of the *Rachel's Vineyard Whitehorse* team or attending a healing retreat, please feel free to email us at rvwhitehorse@gmail.com. All inquiries are kept in strict confidence. For general information about Rachel's Vineyard itself, visit www.rachelsvineyard.org.
- Safe Environments and Abuse Prevention** for our diocesan staff and volunteers: For info, letter to RCMP and forms please contact Yolande at the chancery: executiveassistant@whitehorsediocese.ca
- Multicultural Centre** offers services for: applying for work permits & passports, writing resumes, preparing for interviews, learning computer skills, studying for citizenship and driver's licence, plus ESL tutoring for children of all ages. More info: 667 6205 or info@mcyukon.com
- Hospital and Care Home visits by clergy:** If you are hospitalised or a resident in a care home and would like a visit from a member of the clergy please notify a member of the clergy yourself or make sure a family member knows to do this in an emergency. **Do not expect staff to automatically notify clergy.**
- Compassionate Community Care:** Euthanasia Prevention Coalition help line for anyone who is contemplating euthanasia or assisted suicide, or those concerned about others. Call: 1-855-675 -8749
- Baptismal Preparation Classes:** For more information please call Fr. Marc at 633-2647
- Knights of Columbus:** meetings are 7.00 pm, 2nd Wed CYO Hall. Contact Domagoj Pehar, 332-0835

- **Catholic Women's League:** meetings 7.00 pm, 2nd Tues, CYO Hall. Contact Carol Vanderbyl, 633-5348.
- **Planning a yard sale?** OLV has tables you may borrow. No charge, but donations appreciated.
- We have added to our book collection at OLV, located in front porch, they are **free** for you to own or borrow.
- **Fire victims'** reception centre has moved to 9010 Quartz Road according to Legion newsletter.

New: NO FAMILY IN WHITEHORSE? Maybe **ASKANDY** is for you. ASKANDY (Alive and Still Kicking And Not Dead Yet) is several groups of seniors who don't have family in Whitehorse and who agree to serve as "local family" for each other. In each group we share information about: - whom to call if one of us needs serious help. - where important papers are. - where we are (if away). - how to contact our families. - how to take care of our homes if one of us is hospitalized. There are currently 18 members in 3 groups. Most of us are single women but there are two couples. ASKANDY will have an information meeting on September 27, 5 PM in Lewis Hall (basement), Whitehorse United Church. We came out of discussions at Whitehorse United Church but there is no expectation for church connection or interest. For more information, contact Colin Graham at [867] 634-5344 or by email, ccgraham [at] northwestel [dot] net.

Cardinal John Henry Newman famously said in the 19th century when asked who the laity were: "The Church would look foolish without them."

