

CONNECT! SUNDAY REFLECTION

23rd Sunday in Ordinary Time | For Sunday, September 5, 2021

Jesus Healed Me! Let Me Tell You All About It!

Written by Douglas Sousa

Isaiah 35:4-7a
James 2:1-5
Mark 7:31-37



For over 80 years, Alcoholics Anonymous has helped people overcome addictions to alcohol, drugs, and other destructive behaviors. When people working the program achieve a certain level of serenity and healing, they learn that it is not enough to simply stop drinking or using drugs. If they are to know true and lasting healing, they cannot keep their stories to themselves. They have to reach out to others with the good news that their addictions can be overcome. It is part of the healing process itself to help bring others to experience healing in their own lives.

The same is true with those who are healed by Jesus. They are so overcome with joy after their encounter with him that they have to tell everyone about it. It is interesting that throughout the Gospel of Mark, Jesus commands people not to tell anyone who he is and what he has done for them. It seems strange to us that Jesus would want to hide his identity, but he needed it to be clear that he was not a political Messiah who would liberate them from Roman rule, but a suffering servant who would free them from the tyranny of sin. Nonetheless, those whom Jesus heals cannot help but go around telling everyone they meet about the powerful prophet who restored them to health. For them, telling the story of Jesus' healing power is part of the healing process itself.

This Sunday's gospel is no different. Jesus opens the ears of a deaf man and heals his speech impediment. Throughout his whole life he was unable to hear the sounds all around him. Now the first voice he hears is that of Jesus commanding his ears to be opened. During his life he probably spoke only when necessary because he was ashamed of his speech impediment. Now, with his tongue loosened, he cannot help but tell everyone about the miracle that God performed in his life. His first clear words were praise of God for the gift of healing he received in Jesus. How could he now be expected to keep silent about the great work God performed in his life?

Jesus continues to be in our midst exercising his healing powers. Though it is rare, it still happens that people are cured of diseases or physical impairments through the power of prayer. Most often, however, the healings we experience through faith are of an emotional or spiritual nature. Because of our own prayers or those of others, we may find ourselves finally able to forgive someone who has hurt us. Or we may find the ability to let go of a burden of anger which we have been carrying for years. Or we may simply be overcome with a sense of God's infinite mercy and believe that our sins have been forgiven. In one way or another, each of us has been touched by Jesus and healed. Now it is up to us to tell others about it so that they too may meet Jesus, the healer. If we want to hold on to the healing we have received, and if we want it to deepen in our lives, we must spread the good news about what Jesus has done for us.

Douglas Sousa

PRAYER

God, our Father,
You sent your only Son, Jesus, on earth
To heal a broken-hearted and wounded world.
He had compassion on those
Who called on him for help and healing.
He touched the sick and guilt-laden,
And they walked away
In health and freedom of Spirit.
Visit us now with his saving power
So that we too may be released
In mind and body
To praise your healing grace
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen

(Michael Buckley in *The Catholic Prayer Book*)