

**23rd Sunday in
Ordinary Time
September 8-9,
2018**

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Living Catholic in the 808

**Very Rev. Msgr. Gary L. Secor, V.G.
Rector, Cathedral Basilica of
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Today's gospel recounts the physical healing of someone who could not hear or speak. While God is certainly able to perform these sorts of miracles, these events are recounted to us so that we might recognize our need for spiritual and moral healing as well. It is in this light, that God's word invites us to ask ourselves three important questions.

What is it that I am not hearing? Often God is speaking to us through people or events in our lives and we are not listening. Sometimes we are being told to avoid harmful situations or places or persons that put us into temptation to sin. Sometimes we are being told the truth about ourselves, our behavior, or a particular moral issue. Or God could be reminding us of how much we are loved and have been blessed.

Why am I not hearing? In today's world, there is so much background noise that makes it difficult to hear the important messages. Am I choosing to subject myself to that background noise so that God's voice is drowned out? Or perhaps I am practicing selective listening; screening out what is disagreeable or not interesting and focusing on what is agreeable and interesting. As the Letter of James indicates, we can be guilty of making distinctions about what we will hear that allows us to fail to hear the cries of those in need.

Do I recognize the important relationship between listening and speaking? In the gospel cure, the physical relationship between hearing and speaking is highlighted; once the person hears, he is able to speak. This is also true in a spiritual and moral sense. We must practice listening before we practice speaking. God wants us to internalize what we hear so the when we speak we will say what God wants us to say.

Although the gospel healing began in a public setting, Jesus took the individual off privately to perform the cure. So, we gather together each Sunday and support each other in prayer and fellowship. But, God is speaking to each of us in the privacy of our own hearts and we must personally decide how we will answer these three important questions. God challenges us today to "be opened".