

Be Healed - Keep Quiet

This Week's Readings at Mass

- ▶ Isaiah 35:4-7a - Israel's deliverance
- ▶ James 2:1-5 - Against favoritism
- ▶ Mark 7:31-37 - Healing of a deaf-mute

Jesus' ancestors awaited a savior who would work miracles with great power, opening the eyes of the blind, opening the ears of the deaf, and healing the lame. What they probably didn't imagine was a person like Jesus who healed people even in areas like the Decapolis, where most people did not worship the Jewish God. Even less would they have imagined a Messiah who would heal by sticking his fingers in ears and sharing his saliva by touching other people's tongues! Another surprise and mystery for Jesus' followers was his insistence that the people he healed keep quiet about the miracles.

No one knows for sure what Jesus' desire for secrecy was all about, but there are several theories. Perhaps he understood that the more "PR" he got, the less he would be able to move about freely to continue his ministry. Maybe Jesus realized that as soon as he became a public figure, his teaching and preaching would make him enemies and shorten the time before they killed him for his outspoken views. Maybe Jesus didn't want to be known as a sensationalist, a magician, or a miracle worker (there were others in his time and culture), because his message went far beyond physical healing.

The irony of the story is that after Jesus healed a deaf and mute man, the man *couldn't* keep quiet, so Jesus' fame spread in a



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“Say to those whose hearts are frightened:
Be strong, fear not! Here is your God...
he comes to save you.”

Sheepish Question:
What is my part in the work of God's grace?

foreign territory which had previously been “deaf” to his teachings.

Questions of the Week

- 1 When have you had an experience when you were surprised by healing words or actions from an unexpected person or situation?
- 2 Jesus worked this particular miracle outside of a synagogue and outside of his own Jewish community. In what “Decapolis” have you seen God at work (i.e. outside of your religious tradition)?

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