

PASTOR'S COLUMN

“Ephphetha – Open Up!”

In the Rite of Baptism for infants, there is a moment as the Priest or Deacon touches the ears and the lips of the child and says: “The Lord Jesus made the deaf hear and the dumb speak. May he soon touch your ears to receive his word, and your mouth to proclaim his faith, to the praise and glory of God the Father.”

In today’s Gospel, we hear the call of Jesus to the deaf man – “ephphetha – open up!” That call of Jesus extended to the deaf man is given to us as well and is ritualized in the Sacrament of Baptism. It is a constant and continuous challenge to become evermore open to God, Jesus the Christ, love, and life lived in the Spirit in fellowship with our fellow human beings.

The gift of our five senses, sight, hearing, touch, smell, and taste, allow us to interact within the created world in which we live. The “open up” challenge invites us to see our senses as gifts to be used which bring us into ever-deeper relationship with God and God’s Spirit and Energy flowing throughout the world.

The first step in accepting the invitation to “open up” is to surrender. We must surrender to the reality of our lives and the world in which we find ourselves. If we are trying to be in control, making our own way without the assistance of God, then our senses are being used for our own purposes and they have a “one way direction.” We are imposing and forcing ourselves on the world around us.

“The more willing you are to surrender to the energy within you, the more power can flow through you.” (Shakti Gawain)

God’s spirit is not just outside us. God is everywhere. God is in us and around us. God’s Spirit is moving through the trees, mountains, rivers, and other people. When we surrender to this reality, we understand that we are, by nature, connected and part of the whole.

When we surrender, we open the floodgates and let God in. We become empowered. We are given the strength to do what we couldn’t do before. As we surrender, we are strengthened to more easily and effortlessly express our true, unique selves.

“Ephphetha – Open up!”

F. Mike