



23rd. Sunday of Ordinary Time (B)

First Reading:

Isaiah 35:4-7

Say to all faint hearts, Courage! Do not be afraid. Look, your God is coming, vengeance is coming, the retribution of God; he is coming to save you. Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, the ears of the deaf unsealed, then the lame shall leap like a deer and the tongues of the dumb sing for joy; for water gushes in the desert, streams in the wasteland, the scorched earth becomes a lake, the parched land springs of water.

The word of the Lord.

R/. Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm: My soul, give praise to the Lord.

Second Reading:

James 2:1-5

My brothers, do not try to combine faith in Jesus Christ, our glorified Lord, with the making of distinctions between classes of people. Now suppose a man comes into your synagogue, beautifully dressed and with a gold ring on, and at the same time a poor man comes in, in shabby clothes, and you take notice of the well-dressed man, and say, 'Come this way to the best seats'; then you tell the poor man, 'Stand over there' or 'You can sit on the floor by my foot-rest.' Can't you see that you have used two different standards in your mind, and turned yourselves into judges, and corrupt judges at that?

Listen, my dear brothers: it was those who are poor according to the world that God chose, to be rich in faith and to be the heirs to the kingdom which he promised to those who love him.

The word of the Lord.

R/. Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation:

Alleluia! Alleluia!

Speak, Lord, your servant is listening:
you have the message of eternal life.

Alleluia!

Gospel Reading:

Mark 7:31-37

Returning from the district of Tyre, Jesus went by way of Sidon towards the Sea of Galilee, right through the Decapolis region. And they brought him a deaf man who had an impediment in his speech; and they asked him to lay his hand on him. He took him aside in private, away from the crowd, put his fingers into the man's ears and touched his tongue with spittle. Then looking up to heaven he sighed; and he said to him, 'Ephphatha', that is, 'Be opened.' And his ears were opened, and the ligament of his tongue was loosened and he spoke clearly. And Jesus ordered them to tell no one about it, but the more he insisted, the more widely they published it. Their admiration was unbounded. 'He has done all things well,' they said, 'he makes the deaf hear and the dumb speak.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

R/. Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.

Communion Antiphon:

Like the deer that yearns for running streams,
so my soul is yearning for you, my God;
my soul is thirsting for God, the living God.

Sunday, 12 September 2021

Education Sunday is marked this year on 12 September – just after the new academic year starts. The theme for 2021 is 'A word in season', taken from Isaiah 50:4. Churches Together in England (CTE) rightly describes teaching and studying as "demanding and privileged callings" and Education Sunday gives us the opportunity to give thanks to God for all who teach and all who study, for all who continually have to find the right words and deliver them with enthusiasm and graciousness.

Message from Fr Matthew

Covid Update Pope Francis and Pope Benedict have both received their vaccinations and Pope Francis is encouraging people, who have not already done so, to get vaccinated with authorised Covid-19 vaccines. As the virus is still prevalent I encourage you to sign in for Test and Trace purposes; to sanitise your hands as you enter and leave Church and wear a face mask at Mass, unless you are exempt. As more parishioners are returning to Church please take care to maintain space between you and others not in your 'bubble' as you take your seat and when moving to receive Holy Communion. As and when we are able, we will gradually re-introduce the normal practices of public worship, however it may mean that some mitigation measures will need to be re-established if transmission rates increase.

I am grateful for your continued support.

Fr. Matthew

St. Peter Claver: born 1581 at Verdu, Catalonia, Spain. Farmer's son. Studied at the University of Barcelona. Jesuit from age of 20. Priest. Influenced by St. Alphonsus Rodriguez to become a missionary in America. Ministered, physically and spiritually, to slaves when they arrived in Cartegena, converting a reported 300.000, and working for humane treatment on the plantations for 40 years. Organised charitable societies among the Spanish in America similar to those organised in Europe by St. Vincent de Paul. Died 1654 at Cartegene, Colombia of natural causes. Beatified 1851 by Pope Blessed Pius IX. Canonized 1888 by Pope Leo XIII.



Synod 2023: September 2021 - October 2023

A two-year 'synodal' process is taking place in the Catholic Church from September 2021 that culminates in the final Synod Gathering of Bishops in Rome in October 2023. The overall theme is "For a Synodal Church: Communion, Participation, Mission". It's an invitation for us, as Catholics, to 'walk together' and every member of the Church has the right to speak, and the obligation to allow those charged with the work of discernment the freedom to do so.

For the first time, the Synod Office in Rome has produced a comprehensive process which encompasses the stated aim of the Holy Father that the Church in today's world should have a vision of missionary communion orientated to evangelisation.

For more information go to [Catholic Bishops Conference of England and Wales](https://www.cbcew.org.uk) ([cbcew.org.uk](https://www.cbcew.org.uk)) <https://www.cbcew.org.uk/synodal-church/>



Reflection: Jesus said to the deaf man who had also a speech impediment 'Ephphatha' that is 'Be opened'. Is he not addressing the same words to us? An invitation also to us.

'Be opened' - to the goodness of other people, the innocence of babies, the gentleness of the old, the beauties of creation, the knowing smile or people in love, the so many gifts we receive from God daily.

'Be opened' to the unspoken cry for friendship of another, to the call of a lonely person living nearby, the call to share what is surplus to me and no longer needed instead of leaving them in my cupboard when I may never use them again.

Can I practicalise the **'Be opened'** invitation of Jesus?

We all know that we ourselves and others will be the better for it.

Prayer: Lord Jesus, you alone can open the ears of our hearts and free the tongues of our spirits to glorify and praise you by being sensitive as Jesus was to those needing our kindness in whatever form you reveal this to us. Amen

