

EPHPHATHA: BE OPENED

A Meditation on St. Mark vii and 2 Corinthians iii

The healing of the deaf man in St. Mark 7 is among the most tactile and intimate of the Lord's miracles. He takes the man aside from the crowd, puts his fingers into his ears, touches his tongue with spittle, looks up to heaven with a sigh — a sigh that seems to carry the weight of all that is broken in the world — and says: *Ephphatha* — *that is, Be opened*. And immediately his ears were opened and the string of his tongue was loosed.

Ephphatha is one of the few Aramaic words St. Mark preserves, as if the sound itself mattered. It is a command addressed not just to ears and a tongue, but to a condition of being closed — closed to the word that could reach him, closed to the speech that could respond. The miracle is at once physical and parabolic: what Christ does to this man's body is what he does to every soul he encounters. Be opened.

St. Paul in 2 Corinthians 3 draws the same contrast in a different key. The letter of the old covenant came with a veil before the face of Moses — a veil that remains, he says, over those who read it without turning to the Lord. But where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty: *"we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory."* The closed face is opened; the veiled understanding is unveiled.

Both passages are about the same transformation: from closure to openness, from deafness to hearing, from a face turned away to a face turned toward the glory of God. The condition of deafness is not always dramatic. It can be a slow accumulation of inattention, of choosing not to hear, of keeping the Word at a manageable distance. The healing begins when we stand where the deaf man stood: aside from the crowd, with no alternative but the touch of Christ.

"And he charged them that they should tell no man." They could not keep silent. What had been opened could not be closed again. The man who had never heard now heard everything, and could not stop speaking. The opened life overflows. That is the nature of the healing: it does not return us to a previous condition, but makes us into something we were not before.

THE ORDER OF HOLY COMMUNION

Ephphatha: Be Opened

THE TWELFTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

23 AUGUST 2026



*The Church of Our Saviour and the Holy Apostles
The Church of Our Saviour, Santa Barbara*



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The Church of Our Saviour

The Twelfth Sunday after Trinity

23 August 2026

The Processional Hymn.....*Moscow*....# 271

INTROIT. *Deus in adiutorium. Ps. 70.* HASTE thee, O God, to deliver me : make haste to help me, O Lord : let them be ashamed and confounded, that seek after my soul. Ps. *ibid.* Let them be turned backward, and put to confusion : that wish me evil. V. Glory be.

The Collect for Purity & Summary of the Law.....p. 67

The Ninefold Kyrie (Greek).....*Willan*....# 710

The Gloria in Excelsis.....*Merbecke*....# 739

The Collect for Trinity XII.....p. 206

The Epistle: 2 Corinthians iii. 4.....p. 206

GRADUAL & ALLELUIA. *Ps. 34.* I will alway give thanks unto the Lord : his praise shall ever be in my mouth. V. My soul shall make her boast in the Lord : the humble shall hear thereof, and be glad. Alleluia, alleluia. V. *Ps. 88.* O Lord God of my salvation, I have cried day and night before thee. Alleluia.

The Holy Gospel: St. Mark vii. 31.....p. 207

The Nicene Creed.....p. 71

The Sermon Hymn.....*Holley*....# 574

OFFERTORY. *Exodus 32.* Moses besought the Lord his God, and said : Lord, why doth thy wrath wax hot against thy people? Turn from thy fierce wrath : remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, thy servants, to whom thou swarest to give a land flowing with milk and honey. And the Lord repented of the evil which he thought to do unto his people.

The Offertory Hymn.....*Lauda Anima*....# 282

The Doxology.....*Old Hundredth*....# 139

THE ORATE FRATRES. V/ Pray, brethren, that my sacrifice and yours may be acceptable to God the Father Almighty. R/ May the Lord receive this sacrifice at thy hand to the praise and glory of his Name, both to our benefit and that of all his holy Church. (To which the priest responds: Amen.)

The Prayer for the Church & General Confession.....p. 74

The Absolution and Comfortable Words.....p. 76

The Sursum Corda and Proper Preface

The Sanctus and Benedictus.....*Willan*....# 711

THE PRAYER OF CONSECRATION.....p. 80

The Lord's Prayer, the Fraction & Pax Domini

The Agnus Dei.....*Willan*....# 712

The Prayer for Unity.....p. 49

The Prayer of Humble Access.....p. 82

The Communion Hymn.....*St. Flavian*....# 198

The Prayer of Thanksgiving.....p. 83

COMMUNION. *Ps. 104.* The earth, O Lord, is filled with the fruit of thy works : that thou mayest bring food out of the earth, and wine that maketh glad the heart of man : and oil to make him a cheerful countenance, and bread to strengthen man's heart.

POST-COMMUNION COLLECT. WE beseech thee, O Lord, that we which have received this holy sacrament : may in such wise feel the effectual succour of the same; that we being preserved both in body and soul may glory in the fulness of thy heavenly healing. [Through.]

The Dismissal · V/ Depart in Peace · R/ Thanks be to God

The Blessing.....p. 84

The Recessional Hymn.....*Arlington*....# 325