

THE SAD SIGH OF JESUS 8/9/24

The model of healing that Jesus administers to the deaf and dumb man in today's Gospel (Mark 7:31-37), is the same healing ritual that is administered in the Sacrament of Baptism, which loosens us free from the impediment of original sin and giving us the grace to speak clearly about the Good News. In baptism, the Priest, in the name of Jesus, blesses the mouth and ears of the person with the word: Ephphatha (Be Opened). Sin is an impediment that prevents us hearing Jesus calling us to serve God through faith. Unrepentant sin is an obstruction that deprives us of eternal life. Jesus is the Fountain of Eternal Life, so everything that comes from Him, including His spittle, heals sin. Jesus looks to heaven and sighs as He gives a command that the man cannot hear. Healing is a spiritual battle that conquers the invasion of the Enemy, who is Satan. The sigh expressed by Jesus represents all of humanity, because the whole of creation is waiting for freedom through redemption. St Paul tells us (Rom 8:22) that all creation, especially those who genuinely want to go to heaven, sighs and groans together, with the pain and suffering of this world, while awaiting regeneration in the next world called heaven, where there is no pain or suffering because there is no sin.

BAPTISM IS THE GATEWAY TO HEAVEN

Jesus was in a pagan area and by healing the man implies that the call of salvation is for everybody without discrimination of any kind. Those once deaf and dumb towards God would now be capable of hearing and give Him praise and thanksgiving. The sigh of Jesus expresses sadness, and is a result of the fall of Adam, because creation is now subject to the bondage of sin (Rom 8:20). If we understand the damage that sin inflicts on the soul, then we would all sigh, as we bear the condition and responsibility of our own sins. Jesus bears the condition of our sins and so we make Him sad. [A silent sigh would have happened when the sick woman (Lk 8:45-46) touched the garment of Jesus, because He knew immediately that healing power had left Him - the sigh is not recorded but the effects were when He said; - "Who touched Me"?]. We have to be serious about removing sins from our souls, if we want to enter heaven. In the meantime, we have to go to Jesus and allow Him take us aside in the privacy of confession, to heal our souls from the disease of sin. But first, we must be baptised. The finger that touched the man's tongue and ears is the finger of God. It wrote the 10 Commandments on stone tablets. The Commandments are the means that God employs to make us aware of how to avoid sin and be healed. They must be listened to with a humble ear. God took on flesh in Jesus and in touching our humanity, we discern His divinity here on earth. Jesus granted their request to heal the man, but they did not honour His request to tell nobody. Let me always listen to Jesus and not make Him sigh over me. Let me allow myself to be healed of my own spiritual impediment. God bless, Fr. Brendan.