



23rd Sunday of Ordinary Time

Isaiah 35:4-7a
Ps 146:(1b) 7-10
James 2:1-5
Mark 7:31-37

Monday Sept. 7

Col 1:24-2:3
Ps 62:6-7, 9
Luke 6:6-11

Tuesday Sept. 8

Nativity of Virgin Mary

Micah 5:1-4a
or Rom 8:28-30
Ps 13:6ab, 6c
Matt 1:1-16, 18-23

Wednesday Sept. 9

Col 3:1-11
Ps 145:2-3,10-13ab
Luke 6:20-26

Thursday Sept. 10

Col 3:12-17
Ps 150:1b-6
Luke 6:27-38

Friday Sept. 11

1 Tim 1:1-2, 12-14
Ps 16:1b-2a,5,7-8,11
Luke 6:39-42

Saturday Sept. 12

1 Tim 1:15-17
Ps 113:1b--7
Luke 6:43-49

The readings this Sunday show us God's concern for the disabled.

We're all disabled, one way or another. We can have eyes that see and still be blind. In fact, the scripture from James shows us just how blind we can be!

If we see only how a person dresses, for example, without seeing into their hearts where we would recognize their gifts and talents and unique reflection of God, we are being judgmental. If we are more impressed by a person's wealth or education or standing in the community than we are by his/her spiritual energy or insights or willingness to serve, we are being judgmental.

Only God can see all the good that's in a person's spirit, and yet we make assumptions about them as if we were equal to God. Only God can hear the motives and longings behind a person's words, and yet we

quickly judge what is being said as if we know exactly what is meant. Judgmentalism shows us nothing more than how truly blind we are.

Jesus wants to say to each of us: "Ephphatha! May your eyes and ears and mind be opened to the truth!" However, so that we can receive this healing, we have to slow down and stop reacting to what's visible and audible. We cannot trust what we see and hear. We need to take time to prayerfully pause for wisdom and insight and discernment.

This is one of the reasons why Jesus gave us his Holy Spirit. When



we let God's Spirit interpret everything for us, instead of reacting, we will do the way the Lord wants us to. Instead of reacting to partial information, we will respond with faith and compassion.

Reflect & Discuss:

1. In what ways do you show partiality toward some people? What types of people do you tend to automatically prefer, based on outward appearances?
2. And whom do you tend to dislike until you get to know them better?
3. How will you begin to change this automatic reaction by relying on the Holy Spirit?
4. In what ways have you been judged unfairly? How does it feel? Are you judging those who judged you, neglecting to look deeper inside of them?
5. In your faith sharing community or family discussion, take turns naming a false accusation that's been personally experienced, followed by other members describing what their judges were too blind to see. (This last part is very important – it is Jesus providing healing!)