

Friday of the Fifth Week in Ordinary Time

Gospel text (Mk 7:31-37): Jesus left the district of Tyre and went by way of Sidon to the Sea of Galilee, into the district of the Decapolis. And people brought to him a deaf man who had a speech impediment and begged him to lay his hand on him. He took him off by himself away from the crowd. He put his finger into the man's ears and, spitting, touched his tongue; then he looked up to heaven and groaned, and said to him, "Ephphatha!" (that is, "Be opened!"). And immediately the man's ears were opened, his speech impediment was removed, and he spoke plainly (...).

In Jesus' healing action enters the prayer

EDITORIAL TEAM evangeli.net (based on texts by Benedict XVI)

(Città del Vaticano, Vatican)

Today, we consider how in Jesus' healing action clearly enters the prayer, with His eyes looking up to Heaven. The power that cured the deaf-mute was certainly instigated by His compassion towards him, but it came from the fact Jesus Christ appealed to the Father.

The decision to take the sick man aside ensures that at the moment of his healing Jesus and the deaf-mute are on their own, brought together in a unique relationship. The intensity of Jesus' attention is demonstrated in that with a single gesture the Lord touches the sick man's ears and tongue, that is the specific sites of his infirmity, and He used His own fingers and even His own saliva.

—But the central point of this episode, however, is the fact that when Jesus was about to work the healing, He sought His relationship with the Father. Jesus' attention and treatment of the sick man are linked by a profound attitude of prayer addressed to God.