

## **Homily For Saturday of the 25th Week of Ordinary Time- Year 1**

### **St Peter's 8:30 AM PM Mass - September 28, 2019**

**Zech 2:1-5,10-11** "I will dwell in your midst, says the Lord."

**Jeremiah 31** "I will turn their mourning into joy. I will comfort them, and give them gladness for sorrow."

**Luke 9:43-45** "Let these words sink into your ears. The Son of Man is going to be betrayed."

### **Let My Words Sink Into Your Ears**

#### **Introduction**

My father took violin lessons when he was young. At one of his lessons, the teacher said: "Let's hear what you've been practising." Afterwards, he paused before saying: "That's not bad, Robinson. It's not good, but it's not bad." Knowing that story, when he played for us as older kids, we would sometimes say: "That's not bad, Dad. It's not good but it's not bad."

We are always evaluating what is bad and good of what we hear and see. There is a consistent message in the Gospels that, for humans, the tendency is to get it wrong because we use the wrong criteria. We look at things from a worldly perspective rather than a heavenly one. My father would never be confused for a great violinist, but he was able to make real music on a difficult instrument. That is what we should, most have all, have realized with our hearing.

#### **Luke**

In today's Gospel passage, Jesus asks the disciples to "let his words sink into their ears." The context is that Jesus had just healed a demoniac, and the people were amazed at this. Scholars often suggest that this was not really a demon but epilepsy. With biblical scholarship, I think we can get off track sometimes. Our hearing is based on human understanding. What is most important is listening to Jesus. What is most important to hear? Jesus restored the relationship of a father and his son.

That's what Jesus always does. He is the great reconciler. He does it in the sacrament of Reconciliation and he does it in a thousand ways in our lives if we

are attuned to it. When he healed the paralytic who had been lowered down in front of him, he said, "Your sins are forgiven." When they were shocked, he said: "So that you will know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins, I say to you, get up, pick up your bed and go to your home." Hear again how Jesus restores life and relationship. The physical healing is a sign of the greater healing.

Today, though, the words he says are much harder to hear. It is the second time he predicted his Passion and death. "The Son of Man is going to be betrayed into human hands." It tells us that they did not understand the meaning of his words and they were afraid to ask.

While all the people were marveling at the great deeds God was performing, Jesus was predicting that the Son of Man would be a suffering messiah. His message was that the redeeming - the salvation - of creation would not be achieved in comfort. It would be through suffering and death. Even Jesus' disciples fall into the trap of judging by the world's standards. With those glasses on, it is impossible to understand a suffering messiah.

## **Zechariah**

This way of hearing God was not new. The Old Testament people were continually called to let their ears be filled with God's words. The prophets modeled this way of relating to God. That was their job. "The word of the Lord came to the prophet Zechariah." He reports what God asked him to say: "For I will be a wall of fire all around the future Jerusalem, says the Lord, and I will be the glory within it." No more human made walls will be necessary. The Lord will break them down and be the protector and the glory of his people. "I will come and dwell in your midst, says the Lord. Many nations shall join themselves to the Lord on that day, and shall be my people."

## **Call to Action**

We are invited to see that Jesus IS "the glory of the Lord" who has come to dwell with his people. Let your ears be filled with that wonderful news. Let the words of Jesus enter deeply into your ears. In Calvinist Protestantism, those who are destined for heaven will have their ears bored out, as with a drill and by force,

and God will pour his words of salvation into them, which they won't be able to resist. But this is not what Jesus does. He shows us the power and the glory of God in his own reconciling actions. He tells us that our redemption will come through his suffering. The human condition is so resistant to the Word of God that no other means of salvation will be possible. He invites us to hear this word with faith. Today, let us not be afraid to ask Jesus to save us from our own lack of hearing. Today, let us turn our hearts to him. Today, let us find some way to proclaim Jeremiah's words to others: "For the Lord has redeemed them from hands too strong. He will turn their mourning into joy. He will comfort them, and give them gladness for sorrow. Today, let this message be music to your ears.