

# Sermon

◆ **First Reading:** *2 Samuel 7:1-5, 8-12, 16-18*

◆ **Second Reading:** *Romans 16:25-27*

◆ **Gospel:** *Luke 1:26-38*

**LISTEN! YOU ARE TO CONCEIVE AND BEAR A SON .....**

LISTENING!! How good are you at listening? Or do you only half listen and half hear? Is there a difference? Have you the charisma of a listener? ; while I write these few lines about listening, I immediately think of a life saving apostolate which is not far from those of us who live in big fast moving cities, where loneliness and despair may lead to “doing-away-with-oneself”, the SAMARITANS have been around for over 50 years ; these are specially trained volunteers whose task it is TO LISTEN by telephone, to people who are desperate and not far from suicide ; the Samaritan listens intently and compassionately on the other end of the line to anyone who needs help ; the Samaritans do not solve the painful issues of those who call them, they may make suggestions and point the caller towards a more professional intervention ; the Samaritans LISTEN with a non-judgemental approach, anonymity is guaranteed, and the listening continues ; Because of this wonderful listening apostolate, many have risen from the dregs of despair and avoided “doing-themselves-in” ;

How well do parents listen to their children? How well do married couples listen to each other from the heart? Marriage counsellors will tell you that serious marital problems emerge because spouses don't bother to listen to each other properly, one of them will eventually roar **“HONEY!, YOU'R JUST NOT LISTENING TO ME”**

**“WHAT!!!? THAT'S RIDICULOUS!!, IT'S YOU WHO DON'T LISTEN TO ME” .....**does any of this sound familiar????

If you go thru' the prophetic part of the Bible(...Abraham, Moses, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel etc.) they all had to listen to what the Lord God had to say to them **A VOICE THAT SPEAKS OF PEACE ....**

In to-day's Gospel reading, the angel visits Mary, the first word from the angel to Mary is **L I S T E N!**, then comes the message **YOU ARE TO CONCEIVE AND BEAR A SON....**after this Mary trusted herself completely and unconditionally to the will of God ;

During the rite of Baptism for children, there is a special blessing over the ears and mouth of the newly-baptized **THE LORD JESUS MADE THE DEAF HEAR AND THE DUMB SPEAK ; MAY HE SOON TOUCH YOUR EARS TO RECEIVE HIS WORD, AND YOUR MOUTH TO PROCLAIM HIS FAITH, TO THE PRAISE AND GLORY OF GOD THE FATHER.....**so that's two ears and one mouth blessed!! Not two mouths and one ear!!, looking at this on "face-value", pardon the pun!, it would seem that God intended us to use our ears more than our one mouth, where does this leave us as regards our growth in Faith? You and I are bound to listen to what the Lord God has to say to us, are we attuned to the inner harmony of our prayer?, in the midst of so much noise and vast distractions, can we quietly go aside and listen to what the Lord God has to say? No! we won't hear words nor sentences "thrown at us" like what we see in spooky films.

You and I may LISTEN to the Holy Spirit in prayerful silence, praying the Rosary, reading a passage of Scripture, then we have to be still, silent, and to just LIS-TEN! That's how Mary responded to the message of the angel, she discovered the will of God by listening, then she rejoiced **MY SOUL GLORIFY THE LORD, MY SPIRIT REJOICES IN GOD, MY SAVIOUR....**

One troublesome issue here in our part of the world is the amount of noise everywhere and our vast distractions! go into those internet cafés/restaurants and you'll see people locked into their own little world of WHAT? work!, entertainment! business deals, studies etc., nothing wrong with all that, these are great inventions in keeping ourselves to ourselves, you don't have to bother anyone, as in, "I don't have to listen to you, so you don't have to listen to me, let's just keep it that way" but this is not getting us any closer to each other ; mod-con-technology is mighty but it can become addictive if we don't control it ; It could also become our little god and rob us of precious time in getting more important things done, OR is my observation way-off-the-mark??

For believers in the Risen Lord, we need that sacred time in our routine to **LIS- TEN TO THAT VOICE THAT SPEAKS OF PEACE....**because if we don't, if our efforts are only half-hearted, then we end up all the poorer spiritually ;

The Christmas hustle n' bustle is upon us, also we're still in the middle of this Covid-19, and most of all that "Ho! Ho! Ho!" advertising has precious little to do with the real meaning of the season ; as we approach the great spiritual celebration on 25<sup>th</sup> of this month, let us be a listening people, using the two ears that God gave us to listen, hopefully with fewer distractions, allowing in the mysterious promptings of the Holy Spirit, being still and at peace with ourselves, remembering that **THE VOICE THAT SPEAKS OF PEACE HAS OUR BEST INTERESTS AT HEART AND WILL ALWAYS GUIDE US TOWARDS DEEPER UNION WITH THE GOD AND FATHER OF US ALL....**

....be well.....stay healthy.....

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