

Daily Readings

Monday, September 8
Micah 5:1-4A or
Romans 8:28-30
Psalms 13:6; Matthew 1:1-16,
18-23 or 1:18-23

Tuesday, September 9
Colossians 2:6-15
Psalms 145:1-2, 8-11
Luke 6:12-19

Wednesday, September 10
Colossians 3:1-11
Psalms 145:2-3, 10-13
Luke 6:20-26

Thursday, September 11
Colossians 3:12-17
Psalms 150:1-6
Luke 6:27-38

Friday, September 12
1 Timothy 1:1-2, 12-14
Psalms 16:1-2, 5, 7-8, 11
Luke 6:39-42

Saturday, September 13
1 Timothy 1:15-17
Psalms 113:1-7
Luke 6:43-49

Jesus provides people hope

23rd Sunday in Ordinary Time
(Sept. 7): (R3) Mark 7:31-37; (R1) Isaiah 35:4-7; (R2) James 2:1-5.

Have you ever noticed that Jesus seemed to have a special love for people who were handicapped — without sight or without hearing or without the use of their limbs?

When Jesus wanted to validate his ministry with John the Baptist, he said, "Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind regain their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the dead are raised, and the poor have the good news proclaimed to them" (Matthew 11:5). Jesus seemed to have a special concern for those who were limited physically.

In our Lord's day these people were probably numerous in Galilee. There were no scientific advances in those days. Routine injuries or relatively common childhood diseases could lead to the loss of sight or hearing or mobility. There were no government programs, no computers, nothing to give them hope except the love of family or friends — and the healing touch of Jesus.

Sunday's Gospel took place near the Sea of Galilee, in the region of the Decapolis. While there, "some



Father Albert Shamon

A word for Sunday

people brought to Jesus a deaf man who had a speech impediment and begged him to lay his hand on him." The people who brought the man to Jesus were probably family or friends. All we know is that he was important to somebody because they asked Jesus to lay his hand on him.

There is always hope for people who are loved. James W. Moore, in his book *When All Else Fails, Read the Instructions*, tells about a made-for-TV movie years ago titled "The Betty Ford Story." The movie was produced with the help and support of former first lady, Betty Ford. Betty was overwhelmed by the demands and stresses of being this nation's first lady. She was afflicted with the terrible pain of arthritis. Over time she became addicted to medication and alcohol.

At first she denied that she had a problem. But eventually she saw the truth of the accusations, and then she sought help. Sometimes the most loving thing one can do for someone is to tell them in love the brutal truth. Betty Ford's family loved her enough to help her see herself as she really was. As long as there is someone who cares for us, there is hope. That's the first thing we need to see.

The second thing is that no one is hopeless who is open to Jesus. Someone brought this deaf man with

a speech impediment to Jesus. Jesus took him aside in private, away from the crowd. Then he put his fingers into the man's ears, and he spat and touched his tongue. Can't you imagine the expression on this poor man's face? He probably wondered "what is this guy doing?" But he did not resist. He submitted to the Master. The key to successful living is to be open to the Master's touch.

Henry Viscardi was born with physical disabilities. Instead of fully developed legs he was born with two stumps. He learned to walk on his stumps, but the ridicule of others hurt him very much. One day he said to his mother "Why me?" She said, "When it was time for another crippled boy to be born the Lord held a meeting and said, 'I think the Viscardis would be a good family to take care of him.'"

It was a simple story, but Henry felt after that he had a place and purpose in life. He stopped asking "Why me?" and began making the most of his abilities. Eventually he graduated from Fordham University and made a success of his life. He started a school for children with disabilities to enable them to cope with their problem. Henry learned that God had a plan for his life, that he made him the way he was so he could become what he was.

Henry looked for God's hand in his life and yielded to it and accomplished far more than the majority of people with two good legs. As long as there is somebody who loves you, there is hope. As long as one is willing to yield to the touch of Jesus, there is hope. If we allow Jesus to have his way with us, we will be amazed at what he can do with us, and what we can do with him!

Father Shamon is administrator of St. Isaac Jogues Chapel, Fleming.

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To the editor:

Father McBri of Aug. 21 left ing just what h the fact that 83 foreign semin study in the U and intend to r "do not fully unc culture." Perhap we are too "adv the rest of the that other count caught up wi maybe, since w ticultural socie failed to include tions of all cultu Mass. Would Fat er that discrimin part? Worldwi ences didn't see before Latin w from the Mass had a universal I

This summer been blessed wit priest who is sta parish. He is fro has spent thre Africa. We hav problems with This just could be to the fact that first and CATHOLIC!

Mary Lou
Mountain Ris

Program
open to
immigra

To the editor:
Starting Octobe