

St. Louis Catholic Church

Monday of the 3rd Week of Lent

2 Kings 5:1-15

Luke 4:24-30

Stop, look and listen baby. That's my philosophy. Words from an early Elvis song that could be the church calling us to 40 Days of Lent. Stop getting so carried away with the busyness of your life. Slow down for just a little while this season of grace, or stop a little bit daily. Stop, too, doing what you know is not the best version of yourself. Stop waiting to do the thing that you know is necessary for your life, family and relationship.

Look within yourself and find out where your real treasure is in life. Look at your habits, lifestyle and behavior and see what life lesson you are teaching. Are people able to look at us and see a living homily or sermon? St. Francis of Assisi encouraged his disciples and all of us to "preach the Gospel everyday of your lives, and when necessary, use words". Look at the role that you are in and see if you are living it to the fullest. Those roles are priest, deacon, husband, wife, child, parent, brother/sister, student, classmate, friend, worker. Roles in our faith life are being stewards of the gifts and talents God has blessed us with. Look and honestly answer if we are doing all, enough or anything for the praise of the Lord and the good of others.

Listen to your conscience every day. Listen to God who speaks to you when you are quiet and available to God in prayer. Listen to the people who talk to you everyday especially those closest to you in your family and workplace. Sometimes we only hear and don't listen to the pain, hurt, confusion, loneliness, ignored and neglected feelings of expression. Listen to people who have something critical and constructive to express. It's hard especially when it is said in a tone that is offensive. That's a good clue for all of us to be gentle in our expressions toward another.

Jesus was in the synagogue at Nazareth. The verses before today's Gospel were from Isaiah being quoted and Christ said, "today this passage is fulfilled in your hearing". All spoke well of Him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from His mouth. Then the tables turned and what they heard was offensive. He says that not listening to the prophets was a danger. When people don't listen then God doesn't work in their lives. Gentiles were healed of leprosy in the past and not the people of Israel who didn't listen.

Who is this? Isn't he the carpenter's son? He's too familiar to listen to and how can He teach this people. Christ says it happened in the time of Elijah and Elisha. People didn't stop, look and listen to these resources of life.

God gave new life to the widow of Sidon at a time of great drought and famine. The King of Israel wouldn't come to Elijah for repentance. The widow and her son were open to the message of God. In Elisha's day many in Israel could have come to the prophet for healing. Naaman, the foreign general, listened to the servant girl and went and was healed of leprosy.

Pride keeps us from stopping, looking and listening to someone outside of ourselves. Naaman overcame his pride when told to wash in a dirty river. The lowest of the low encouraged him to do what he was told.

Naaman becomes a wonderful model of how and to whom we ought to listen. Maybe it is in a quiet whisper or a strong message from God; maybe it's in an experience that happens; maybe it's in an example from a friend or familiar person; maybe a homily; maybe a life lesson. All day long and every day of our lives God is speaking to each of us. It could be in a teaching of the Church. He wants to call us to be our best. The woman at the well knew that it was God speaking to her in yesterday's Gospel. That was in an experience and with a person she could never have expected or imagined.

Almost 3 weeks into Lent. It's the philosophy of the Church to get all of us to repent, grow and change. Stop, Look and Listen, Baby, That's God's Philosophy.

God Bless,
Msgr. John McArthur

Reminders:

- 1) Fish Fry Friday
- 2) Men's Morning of Spirituality--Saturday, April 2nd--St. Francis Church
- 3) Commitment Sunday for Bishop's Annual Appeal--After the video, all please come forward with pledge card, one time payment card. Let's get 100% participation. Celebrate our Diocese's birthday--40 years--God blesses us all. Let's say thanks and keep the light burning.