



Impact

Let your heart be moved.

Be changed by the word of God.
Be changed by by the Word of God.

"Thus says the LORD: Just as from the heavens the rain and snow come down and do not return there till they have watered the earth, making it fertile and fruitful, giving seed to the one who sows and bread to the one who eats, so shall my word be that goes forth from my mouth; my word shall not return to me void, but shall do my will, achieving the end for which I sent it." (Is 55:10-11)

There is the word of God, words recorded in Sacred Scripture, that reveal who God is and what it means to live in right relationship with God and others. And there is the Word of God, Jesus Christ, who shows and shares God's love perfectly and who invites us, calls us, compels us to live as God desires. We are called to listen to God's word and to see God's love manifested in Jesus, the Word of God, so that we may be of one heart and mind with the Lord, bearing the fruit of God's love, justice, and peace in our lives, cities, and world.

All ears

We all know there is a difference between hearing and listening. Sometimes, perhaps often, we physically hear the things people are saying to us. We may hear the word of God proclaimed at Mass or in prayerful reading. We might hear the sound of a bird calling or child singing. But we do not always listen. With the word of God, we should be all ears. As St. Benedict says in his Rule, we should listen with the ear of our heart. We listen for the meaning of the passage in light of the circumstances of our lives and all that has been revealed through Scripture and Tradition.

Eyes wide open

Jesus looked beyond the surface and saw the pain, suffering, confusion, and sorrow of the people in his midst. He did not let anything stand between him and those who needed him. In seeing, he responded with God's mercy, forgiveness, and healing. As Christ's people, we are called to open our eyes to the needs of those around us. We must honestly examine our lives, admit that we are sometimes weak, selfish, complacent, or trapped by fear. With eyes wide open we see the ways we might show God's love through our attitudes and actions and resolve to respond as the Lord desires.

Hearts moved by love

Our Sunday readings this month challenge us to not only hear the word of God, but to take it deeply to our hearts, and to act on it. The word of God, we are told, is like a seed. Do we cultivate our hearts as good soil in which God's word may take root and grow? Do we open our minds to the challenge of living as Christ's people? Do we bear good fruit, as disciples and stewards who hear the call of Christ and respond with our lives? The Gospels may sound harsh at times, as Jesus describes the difference between those who are faithful and fruitful and those who are not. Yet when we allow God's Word to take root in our hearts, responding will not be burdensome, but rather, our lives will bear an abundant harvest of love in the world.

Faithful and fruitful

With our ears, eyes, and hearts open to the Word and the word, our lives will be transformed. Our hearts will be moved. We will become more like the One whose word we hear. Our listening to the Word of God will change us! We will be Christ's people in the world.

Impact this month

OPEN YOUR EARS

Prayerfully reflect on God's word and hear Christ's call more deeply in your life.

OPEN YOUR EYES

See the needs of people around you and the need for justice, peace, and hope in our world.

OPEN YOUR HEART

Allow God to transform your heart with love. Filled with love of God, make a commitment to love of neighbor.

BE FAITHFUL

Make a "conscious, firm decision, carried out in action, to be a follower of Jesus Christ, no matter the cost to yourself." (SDR, 1, adapted)

BE FRUITFUL

Examine your life, acknowledge areas of selfishness, prejudice, and complacency and resolve to take action.



Bring faith to life. Find life in faith.

Faith 2020

Jesus included everyone. Outsiders. Those on the margins. Women. He offered healing to the sick and reconciliation to sinners. This, Jesus tells us, is what the kingdom of God is all about. In God's kingdom, everyone has a chance. All who live in right relationship with God and others have a place in God's kingdom. It is worth more than we can imagine, a treasure, a pearl of great price. Above all else, God's kingdom is rooted in love. Jesus shows us that in God's sight, every person is valued and treasured, that love of God must lead to love of neighbor. As followers of Jesus, we must be driven by this same love, ready to love as God loves, excluding no one. Jesus was not passive in the ways he proclaimed God's kingdom on earth, and neither should we be. In fact, in giving himself on the cross, Jesus ensured that God's love would reign over hatred forever.

Weeks of unrest and protest in the U.S. and around the world, sparked by the killing of George Floyd by Minneapolis police in May, lead us to confront racism and racial injustice in all its forms. "Racist acts are sinful because they violate justice. They reveal a failure to acknowledge the human dignity of the persons offended, to recognize them as the neighbors Christ calls us to love." (Open Wide our Hearts, 3) As people who are bound to Christ through baptism, we are called to be God's people of love for all people. Now.

"Love compels each of us to resist racism courageously. It requires us to reach out generously to the victims of this evil, to assist the conversion needed in those who still harbor racism, and to begin to change policies and structures that allow racism to persist. Overcoming racism is a demand of justice, but because Christian love transcends justice, the end of racism will mean that our community will bear fruit beyond simply the fair treatment of all." (U.S. Bishops, "Open Wide Our Hearts, 18)

"To press forward without fear also means cooperating with God's grace by taking direct and deliberate steps for change. It means opening doorways where once only walls stood."

(Open Wide Our Hearts, 21)