

Homily  
Memorial of Saint Scholastica, Virgin  
February 10, 2023

The Greek philosopher, Epictetus, is credited with the quote, “We have two ears and one mouth so that we can listen twice as much as we speak.” This is a good rule of thumb I need to embrace better. How often do I open mouth, insert foot. It is when I listen that I learn and grow.

But it’s not the volume of my speech that gets me in trouble, it’s the quality. I need to consider what I’m saying. Am I being uplifting or grumbling? Am I sharing Good News or gossip? And who is listening to me? Am I being a good influence or not so good an influence?

Also, I can do a better job of what I’m listening to. Am I listening to uplifting, encouraging words or lies and deceitful things? And who am I listening to? What is the intent of the content?

The man brought to Jesus was deaf and had a speech impediment, meaning he struggled to hear and speak. Isn’t that like many of us? I’m so often stuck in my own mind that I don’t hear what is being shared with me. How often am I presented the Word of God and am just listening to my own thoughts?

Jesus opened the man’s ears. If we are open to the Word of God, how much better we hear.

The man, and those with him, were so excited that they couldn’t keep silent. They witnessed the Goodness of God and they couldn’t stop proclaiming this miracle. This is what we are called to do each and every day, especially at Mass; we hear the Good News, we receive the miracle of His Body and Blood and we are sent to be Christ to the world.

St. Scholastica is the sister of St. Benedict, the founder of western monasticism. She and her brother were very close, a familial love that centered on God. Benedict wrote the Rule, the basis for the Benedictine order and the monastic life. He and his sister each resided in monasteries not far from each other. Because of the Rule, they only saw each other once a year. As the story goes, the last time they saw each other, Scholastica was adamant that they continue their conversation into the night, but Benedict objected, stating that it was against the Rule and he had to return to his cell.

She immediately dropped to her knees and turned to God, who listened. A storm broke out with flashes of lightening and a downpour that prevented Benedict from leaving. They spent the night in prayerful conversation. Sometimes it’s good to talk, especially when the topic is God.

Scholastica dedicated her life to her brother’s Rule, which focused on prayer and work. Silence was encouraged. Obedience and humility were the way of life.

We can take courage in the example of St. Scholastica and the man cured in today’s Gospel; we trust in God and take joy in proclaiming His goodness to all the world.