

# The Christian Community

Movement for Religious Renewal

Hollywood Congregation

Rev Ben van Lieshout  
3 Stewarts Place  
Holywood, Co Down  
BT18 9DX  
90424254  
07974960570  
[benvl@onetel.com](mailto:benvl@onetel.com)

## Newsletter for the week of Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> August.

Dear friends,

Our services in Hollywood have started again.

And next week, 31 August, we will also begin with Gospel Study.

This will happen fortnightly on a Tuesday evening at 20.00 between now and Advent. Everyone is welcome, we will turn to the gospel reading of that Sunday and you don't have to commit to the whole series, you can join whatever sessions you can.

For all our activities in Hollywood the only restriction we have to abide by is the rule for social distancing in indoor spaces which has been reduced to 1 m.

So I did some measuring in our chapel in Hollywood and with keeping 1 m distance we can seat everyone who wants to come.

So you will no longer need to announce yourself to book a place for services, talks, or any other events, you can just turn up.

And there will be communion at every service in the way we have been sharing it during the Wednesday service.

I will continue to write down the names of those attending for possible contact tracing.

But the virus hasn't gone away so, if you have any symptoms that could be covid, or have been in close contact with someone who has, please stay away, it is now up to our individual responsibility to live with this virus.

In Glenraig we have had to stop having services again because of the increased risk of covid spreading but in Mourne Grange where we had to cancel the last service we will celebrate The Act of Consecration of Man this Sunday.

Ben van Lieshout

### Hollywood

Wednesday 25 <sup>th</sup> August	The Act of Consecration of Man	10.00
Tuesday 31 <sup>st</sup> August	Gospel Study: Mark 17, 31-37	20.00
Wednesday 1 <sup>st</sup> September	The Act of Consecration of Man	10.00

### Glenraig

Due to covid planned services have been cancelled for the next few weeks

### Mourne Grange

Sunday 29 <sup>th</sup> August	The Act of Consecration of Man	10.15
--------------------------------	--------------------------------	-------

## The gospel reading for Sunday 29 August is Mark 7:31-37



As he was again leaving the region around Tyre, he went through the country around Sidon to the Sea of Galilee in the middle of the region of the ten cities of the Decapolis.

They brought to him one who was deaf and who spoke with difficulty and asked him to lay his hands on him.

And he led him apart from the crowds by himself, laid his finger in his ears, and moistening his finger with saliva, touched his tongue, and looking up to the heavens, sighed deeply and said to him, “Ephphata, be opened.”

His hearing was opened, and the impediment of his tongue was removed, and he could speak properly.

And he commanded them not to say anything to anyone. But the more he forbade it, the more they widely they proclaimed it.

And the people were deeply moved by this event, and said, “He has changed all to the good: the deaf he makes to hear and the speechless to speak.

## A homily on Mark 7, 31 – 37



As we get older, our hearing often declines. It is as though our ears close a bit.

We fail to accurately pick up what was spoken to us.

And so we may get a false message.

And to others, our response may seem inappropriate, even humorously so.

Yet even if our hearing is perfect, it can be that our hearts are closed, so we don't pick up what is really being said.

In a sense, we are all deaf.

Our hearts are sometimes closed, often in self-defence, against the overwhelming voices of pain and suffering around us.

We rarely hear the inspirations our angels are whispering to us.

We speak with difficulty.

Yet our words wield enormous creative power, for good or for ill.

The poet Wislawa Szymborska makes us aware of their power; she says,

*When I pronounce the word Future,  
the first syllable already belongs to the past.*

*When I pronounce the word Silence,  
I destroy it.*

*When I pronounce the word Nothing,  
I make something no nonbeing can hold.\**

Christ came to open our hearing, to open our hearts so that our words have the power to create. 'Be opened,' he says. 'Hear my voice in your heart.' When you break your silence with love, you *create* a future which no non-being can destroy.