



**ARCHDIOCESE OF PALO-CATECHETICAL MINISTRY**  
**Module 52 (August 29, 2021) 22nd Sunday in Ordinary Time- Cycle B**  
**Theme: Clean Hands and Pure Heart**  
**Mk 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23**



**INTRODUCTION**

Talk about the importance of following protocols in homes and communities at this time of Covid 19 pandemic.

Why do you think these protocols are important to follow?  
*(We have protocols or set of rules to follow at this time of pandemic. Instructions are simple: no big gatherings, social distancing, wear mask and face shield, isolation if symptoms persist. These are important to follow to prevent the spread of the virus and getting sick.*

The washing of hands and food we commonly do these days of pandemic have different meaning in the time of Jesus. Let see what Jesus says about this in our Gospel Story today.



**OPENING PRAYER**

Prayer or any song to the Holy Spirit



**PHASE ONE**  
**REMEMBER THE STORY OF JESUS**

**Proclamation of the Gospel Story Mk 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23**

*Enthroned the Bible on a table with lighted candle)*

A moment of prayerful silence

*We will not be able to understand the Word of God unless God himself opens our hearts. Let us now welcome Jesus as he speaks to us through his Word*

Alleluia

Jas 1:18

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

The Father willed to give us birth by the word of truth that we may be a kind of first fruits of his creatures.

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

A reading from the Gospel of Mark ( 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23)

Praise to you, O Lord Jesus Christ



When the Pharisees with some scribes who had come from Jerusalem gathered around Jesus, they observed that

ate their meals

with unclean, that is, unwashed, hands.

—For the Pharisees and, in fact, all Jews, do not eat without carefully washing their hands, keeping the tradition of the elders.

And on coming from the marketplace they do not eat without purifying themselves. And there are many other things that they have traditionally observed, the purification of cups and jugs and kettles and beds. —

So the Pharisees and scribes questioned him, "Why do your disciples not follow the tradition of the elders

but instead eat a meal with unclean hands?"

He responded,

"Well did Isaiah prophesy about you hypocrites, as it is written:

This people honors me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me;

in vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrines human precepts. You disregard God's commandment but cling to human tradition."

He summoned the crowd again and said to them, "Hear me, all of you, and understand. Nothing that enters one from outside can defile that person; but the things that come out from within are what defile.

"From within people, from their hearts, come evil thoughts, unchastity, theft, murder, adultery, greed, malice, deceit, licentiousness, envy, blasphemy, arrogance, folly. All these evils come from within and they defile."

*Reader: The Gospel of the Lord*

*All: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ*

**1,2 Brief Guided silent Meditation / Personal Prayer**

What does that Jesus say about the heart?

**1.3 Text in Context**

Brief background on the Reading

We know that the Scribes and Pharisees are religious leaders of Judaism whose followers are called Jews. Judaism believes in the One God and is founded on the law of God (or divine law) given to Moses.

They have the book called the Torah. This book contains the Teaching or the Law which can be found in the first five books of the Bible (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy). The elders expanded the divine law given in these books into thousands of rules that will guide every action and situation. This may refer to selling and buying goods, settling conflicts among neighbors and tribes, births and deaths, planting and harvesting, cleansing rituals and others small things in daily life. Related instructions and rules were drawn and became part of tradition of the elders who studied the law and put them into writing.

Today's Gospel story tells us about what Jesus thinks about them.

1. What was the particular observation of the Pharisees and scribes in Jesus' disciples? *They observed that some of his disciples ate their meals with unclean, that is, unwashed, hands.*

2. How do the Jews keep the traditions of the Elders? *They observe cleansing or purification rituals like washing their hands, the purification of cups and jugs and kettles and beds.*

3. What did the Pharisees and the scribes ask Jesus? *Jesus asked them, why do your disciples not follow the tradition of the elders but instead eat a meal with unclean hands?"*

4. What did Jesus say that shows better picture of a person's holiness than washing one's hands and dishes? *(the words and deeds he or she does)*

5. What is your understanding of this line? *Nothing that enters one from outside can defile that person; but the things that come out from within are what defile. Evil things come from one's heart and not from outside.*

6. What are the six sins of the heart that Jesus mentioned to the crowd? *deceit (lying), wantonness (shamelessness, immodesty),*

*jealousy or envy, slander (imputing evil to others), pride (arrogance), and folly (the stupidity of one lacking moral judgment).*

**PHASE II REFLECT the Story  
of the Church  
(Teachings of the Church)**



**The Pharisees' belief**

In the Gospel we hear the Pharisees complaining to Jesus about his disciples not following the tradition of the Elders *Why don't your disciples wash their hands before eating? Why don't they follow what our Elders taught us on cleansing rituals (purification)?*

The Pharisees asked these questions, not for any reason like hygiene or health. Instead, they are over-concerned of external action like ritual purity on themselves, food, even on utensils used for cooking and eating. They believe that dirt will make them unclean or sinful before God's sight if they would not follow the rituals. What is acceptable to God (morally good) is disregarded in place of ritual rules.

Such human traditions may not be bad at all. But they should not be seen equal to Divine Law or God's Commandments.

We can imagine their immediate response to a person dying of hunger. They would do first all the rituals before attending to needs of the person.

How often do we ignore the important teachings of God like attending Sunday Mass (in virtual) or going to confession at least once in a year?

The Church is like a mother, that guides us to the "right path" and yet we refuse to hear its teachings because we are comfortable with some other "tradition", or mere following the flow of what the world does. How are we affected by some social issues like divorce, abortion, use of violence in defense of the law and many others that disrespect human life? How do we see ourselves in these areas as Catholic Christians?

**Jesus appeals to right understanding.**

When human practices become more important than a God's work, Jesus corrects their behavior and quotes lines from the Old Testament to prove what he is saying: *This people honors me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me; in vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrines human precepts. You disregard God's commandment but cling to human tradition."*

Here Jesus denounces strongly the sin of hypocrisy. He calls the Pharisees and scribes hypocrites. Hypocrisy means putting God in the second place and external things or appearances in public, in the first place. *"Man sees the appearance, the Lord sees the heart"* (1 Samuel 16:7)

Jesus invites us to explore the meaning of purity of heart. What are present "inside" and the "outside," of us? The heart is the center of our moral being. What comes to us through the senses are processed in the heart. A heart near to God is attuned to God's law, made available to us through his Word. Only a heart that is pure can listen and act on God's Word.

It is not ritual rules or anything that one eats makes a person sin. Impurity is caused by evil thoughts deeds coming from the heart that is away from God. Inner dispositions of the heart count far more than external behavior. Now we may rather better say: Clean hands and pure heart lead us closer to the love God and love of neighbors.

**Only one Standard- Jesus**

We live in a complex and confusing time. There are voices that dictates to us what could be considered right or wrong. Often, we give more focus on what others may think or say than to what we believe. We tend to see ourselves and those around us according to their standard. *We may say, "Yes, I sin, but I'm still not as bad as that guy,"*

When we don't allow our beliefs to be the inward focus of our hearts — to be the things we truly believe in — our "faith" is really just outward actions. Then we're prone to compare our so-called faith with that of others. We become hypocrites by making other people the standard of morality and holiness. But other people aren't the standard. Jesus is our standard. <https://www.cru.org/us/en/train-and-grow/>

**PHASE THREE RESPOND – with/ in my personal  
faith /community faith story**

If we want a heart that discern according to the spirit, we go to the Bible and to what Church teaches us. God makes himself known to us his love, goodness and wisdom through his Word.

How do I make my heart pure from heard of "believers and doers" of the Word of God and what we believe as Catholics?



**CLOSING PRAYER**

Jesus, Lover of chastity, Mary, Mother most pure, and Joseph, chaste guardian of the Virgin, to you I come at this hour, begging you to plead with God for me. I earnestly wish to be pure in thought, word and deed in imitation of your own holy purity.

Obtain for me, then, a deep sense of modesty which will be reflected in my external conduct. Protect my eyes, the windows of my soul, from anything that might dim the luster of a heart that must mirror only Christ like purity. And when the "Bread of Angels becomes the Bread of me" in my heart at Holy Communion, seal it forever against the suggestions of sinful pleasures.

Heart of Jesus, Fount of all purity, have mercy on us  
Amen

Source: <https://prayer.knowing-jesus.com/Prayer-for-Courage>

**BACKGROUND FOR THE CATECHISTS  
PURIFICATION OF THE HEART**

**CCC 2517** The heart is the seat of moral personality: "Out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, fornication. . . .

<sup>305</sup> The struggle against carnal covetousness entails purifying the heart and practicing temperance:

Remain simple and innocent, and you will be like little children who do not know the evil that destroys man's life.

**CCC 2518** The sixth beatitude proclaims, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."<sup>307</sup> "Pure in heart" refers to those who have attuned their intellects and wills to the demands of God's holiness, chiefly in three areas: charity;<sup>308</sup> chastity or sexual rectitude;<sup>309</sup> love of truth and orthodoxy of faith.<sup>310</sup> There is a connection between purity of heart, of body, and of faith: The faithful must believe the articles of the Creed "so that by believing they may obey God, by obeying may live well, by living well may purify their hearts, and with pure hearts may understand what they believe."<sup>311</sup>

**CCC 2519** The "pure in heart" are promised that they will see God face to face and be like him.<sup>312</sup> Purity of heart is the precondition of the vision of God. Even now it enables us to see *according* to God, to accept others as "neighbors"; it lets us perceive the human body - ours and our neighbor's - as a temple of the Holy Spirit, a manifestation of divine beauty.

