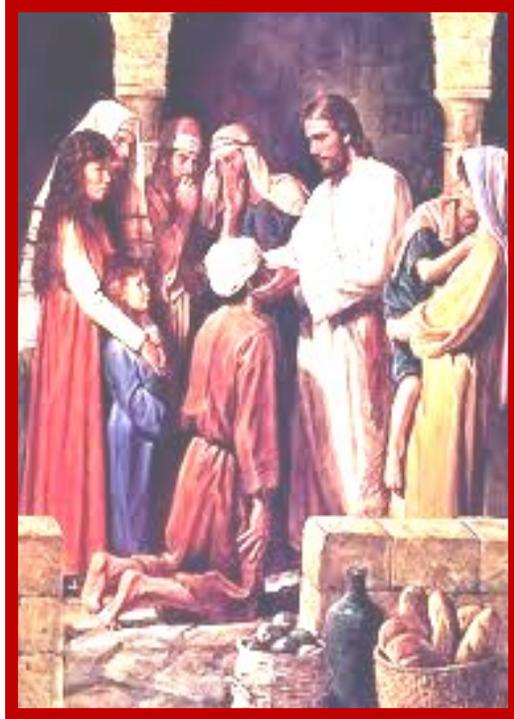
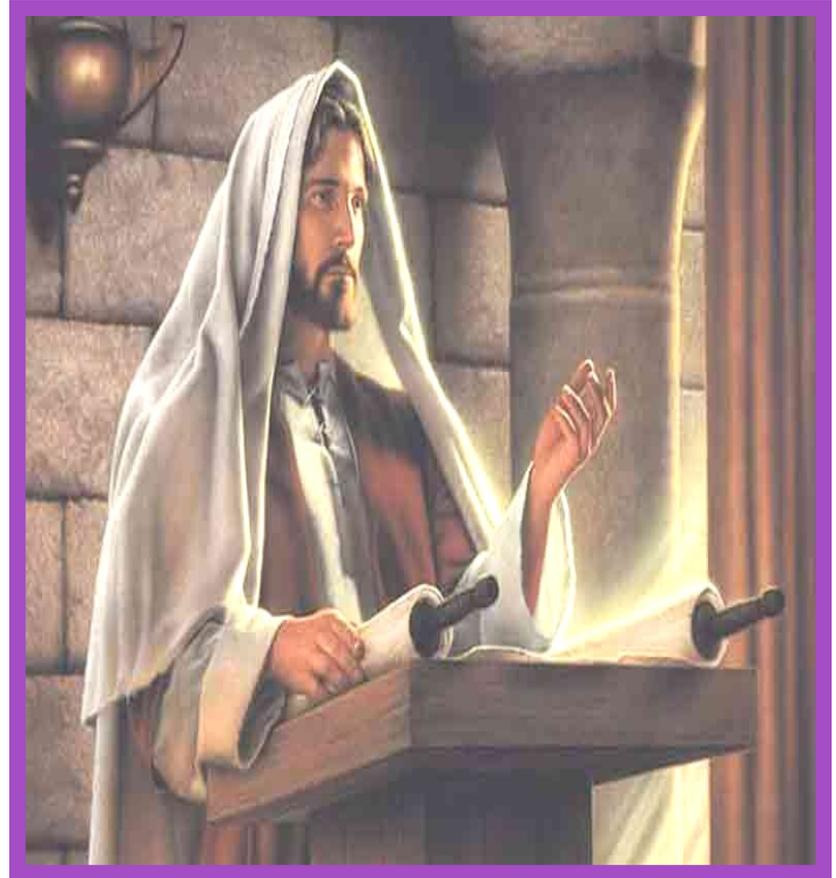


So then, my son, have no part in murmuring; do your work earnestly and in silence: for he who is devoted to silence is close to God and His angels and dwells in heaven. For the Lord tells us that, *he that keepeth his mouth keepeth his soul* (Prov. xiii. 3). And then in the day of our visitation He shall say to us: *Blessed art thou, Israel*, because you kept watch on your tongue; *who is like to thee* (Deut. xxxiii. 29)? May the Lord preserve you in His Grace and peace. Amen.



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**SERMON ON
WATCHFULNESS OF THE TONGUE
FROM THE FATHER'S OF THE CHURCH
105 - 1**



JESUS, OUR FIRST PREACHER!

11TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

Based on the Divine Office-Douay-Rheims Version

Volume 3 - Pages 1340 - 1341 (1962 edition)

Commentary on the Gospel of Mark 7: 31-37

by: Saint Anthony, Abbot

In His sacred Gospel Our Lord Jesus Christ says to us: *Enter ye in at the narrow gate* (Mt. vii. 13). Again He says: *That through many tribulations we must enter into the kingdom of God* (Acts xiv. 21). What this narrow gate is through which we must enter the wise Solomon makes clear to us where he says: *My son, give not thy mouth to cause thy flesh to sin* (Eccles. v. 5). And again: *The mouth of a fool is his destruction* (Prov. xviii. 7). Let us therefore strive to place a strong guard on our lips, that they may not utter anything evil: for evil speech is worse than all poisons.

All other wounds may be healed, but the wound of the tongue has no cure. The tongue of the dragon is less evil than that of the *whisperer*, which in turn comes from a most evil demon: for it provokes quarrelling and bitter strife between brethren, sows evil and discord among the peaceful, scatters many communities. If you permit the *whisperer* to approach you, he will strip you of every merit you possess. Whosoever becomes involved with him has already become a confederate in his bloodshed, in his murders, and in his slayings! For a *whisperer* and a murderer spawn the same whelp: if they do not slay you with the sword, they will bring the same disaster on you with the tongue.

The tongue of the *whisperer* differs little from the serpent's bite: rather, better to live with serpents and scorpions than dwell with a *whisperer*. A blasphemer or tyrant is better than a *whisperer*. All sins are less grievous than those of the *whisperer*. The *whisperer* and those who give ear to him receive the same condemnation. Better for you to come close to fire and be burned, than come nigh to a *whisperer*. Should you tread on boiling pitch, and go carefully, you may escape hurt. But should you chance to pass by a *whisperer*, keep far from him, lest he lead you into irreparable disasters: for his mouth at all times is filled with treachery and death.

Because of these things I charge you severely, that you separate yourself from a *whisperer* as speedily as you can. Let him be a monk, let him be an anchorite, let him be a champion of virtue or but a novice, whoever he is, as long as he is a *whisperer*, fly from him. Though he should be your own father, or your brother, if he is a *whisperer*, keep far away from him. For it is better to dwell with a lion or a lioness than with one who is a *whisperer*. And do not be ashamed to fly from him: so that he shall not infect you with the poison of his sin.