

The Art of Hearing

Scripture Reference: *"He who has ears to hear, let him hear."* (Matthew 11:15, Matthew 13:9, Mark 4:9)

In the Polish National Catholic Church, we believe in the importance of the Preaching and Hearing of the Word of God. We give it sacramental status.

Jesus is issuing a profound warning: **It is entirely possible to listen without ever actually hearing.**

To "have ears to hear" means to possess a heart that is open, receptive, and willing to be changed by what it encounters. In our noisy, fast-paced world, this isn't just a nice spiritual habit. It is a fundamental Christian duty. Today, we are called to reclaim this lost art of listening in three distinct directions: to each other, to God, and to ourselves.

I. Listening to Each Other: The First Act of Love

We live in a culture that values the speaker over the listener. We are told to find our voice, broadcast our opinions, and build our platforms. But the Apostle James flips this worldly wisdom on its head: *"Let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger"* (James 1:19).

In the Christian life, listening to our neighbor is the very first act of love. When we refuse to listen to someone—when we interrupt, check our phones, or simply wait for our turn to speak—we are subtly telling them, *"My thoughts matter more than your existence."*

True Christian listening requires hospitality. It means creating a space inside your own mind for another person's reality, their pain, and their perspective, even if you don't fully understand or agree with it. When we listen deeply to the person sitting across from us—especially the marginalized, the broken, or the person we find difficult—we are honoring the image of God inside them. We cannot love a neighbor we refuse to truly hear.

II. Listening to God: Tuning Out the Noise

If listening to each other is an act of love, listening to God is the anchor of our faith. Yet, many of us treat prayer like a monologue. We present God with our shopping list of requests, say "Amen," and walk away before He can even respond.

Think back to the Old Testament story of the prophet Elijah. He was exhausted, terrified, and hiding in a cave, waiting for God to speak. A fierce wind tore through the mountains, but God wasn't in the wind. An

earthquake shook the ground, but God wasn't in the earthquake. A fire blazed, but God wasn't in the fire. Finally, there came a *"still, small voice"*—a low whisper (1 Kings 19:12).

God rarely shouts. He whispers. And you cannot hear a whisper if your life is screaming with noise. To cultivate ears that hear God, we must intentionally cultivate silence. We have to turn off the notifications, quiet our anxious thoughts, and sit in His presence. Listening to God means immersing ourselves in Scripture, but it also means waiting in the quiet, trusting that the Shepherd's voice will guide us if we only stay still long enough to listen.

III. Listening to Ourselves: The Mirror of the Soul

Finally, there is a third direction we often neglect: we must learn to listen to ourselves.

We are incredibly skilled at running away from our own internal worlds. When sadness, anxiety, guilt, or anger bubble up, our modern instinct is to numb it. We reach for our phones, turn on the TV, or bury ourselves in work. But our emotions and our bodies are often trying to tell us something vital about the state of our souls.

When we slow down and listen to our own fatigue, we realize we need Sabbath. When we listen to our underlying anger, we often discover an unhealed wound or an idol we are trying to protect. Listening to ourselves isn't about self-obsession; it's about self-examination. It is allowing God's light to shine into the dark corners of our hearts so that true healing can begin..

The question is never whether God is speaking. The question is whether we are truly listening.

This week, let us challenge ourselves to put down our defenses, quiet our internal noise, and offer the world—and God—the gift of our full attention. May we be a people marked not by how loudly we speak, but by how deeply we hear.

He who has ears to hear, let him hear.

Praise be the Name of Jesus Christ

Amen.