

Without this foundation, without being personally moved and transformed, everything that you have learned remains superficial and in the long term ineffective. The theological, philosophical, and other diplomas and credentials of the abusers have not helped to protect the children because mere knowledge about the Gospel clearly did not have the transformative power to change people with an official attestation about their knowledge of the heart.

The necessary encounter with our Lord Jesus Christ, as seen in today's Gospel, exhibits four features that are important for the context of our gathering. First, in the Gospel it says that Jesus took the deaf man to the side. The encounter does not happen in the masses. It lives by being personally – not generally or abstractly – addressed. Empty phrases and formula that are said so simply and then automatically repeated are out of place. Second, Jesus sticks his finger in the ears and touches the tongue of the deaf-mute man. He breaks through the customary distance and detachment, and on the other side, the deaf man allows for Jesus to come very close to him. Third, Jesus looks to heaven, turns to the Father in prayer, and asks for heavenly power to change the situation of the deaf man. Fourth, Jesus demands the deaf man to open himself, practically speaking, to take action himself. Altogether it is four elements, which in today's periscope of Jesus' encounter with the deaf man, that are important: personal attention, the authorization to come near, prayer, and self-motivated activity.

From these points, we can learn how we ourselves can come to this self-transforming encounter with Jesus Christ – even in regards to our work and study for the diplomas. Pertinent to what was previously said, here are another four important points.

Point 1

It is not enough to just learn by memorization because the knowledge will just remain abstract. When the self-motivated acquisition of knowledge and the personal responsibility towards knowledge is missing, then so too is the personal tone. Just as Jesus personally speaks to the deaf man, so also should we always be personally challenged by the good news of Jesus Christ, but also by the knowledge that we should learn.

