

By [Glenn CJ Byer, MA SLD](#)

Reading - it is something that society takes for granted these days, and for those who cannot read, life is especially difficult. And so both the first reading and Gospel speak about the value of reading, and in particular of reading aloud to an assembly of people gathered in faith. The word proclaimed is powerful, and in both of these cases it provokes a strong reaction. In the case of Nehemiah, the people rejoice at hearing the word and so hold a festival in honor of the Lord. In the case of Jesus, however, something goes wrong in the hearts of his hearers, and as we will see next week, they reject the good news. But whether the news is received or not, reading God's word is a powerful action, one which makes things happen. The psalm is likewise a meditation on God's word, the power and the beauty of the Law.

The second reading is a continuation of the reading from last Sunday, and this week we come to understand that the variety of gifts from the spirit come together to make up the whole body of Christ. It is not only that each is given their own gift in service of the community, but moreover the community exists truly as a whole only when these gifts are seen as part of that whole.

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