

**Fr. John Sassani**  
**Homily Given on September 6, 2009**  
**Twenty-third Sunday of Ordinary Time**  
**Liturgical Year B**

Friends from Westford were here for a meeting on Tuesday night. They had never been here before, so I brought them up to see the church. When I popped on the lights, they were overcome by awe. I described the work that had been done – how much of the detailed beauty had been painted over and now had been magnificently restored. They were touched by the renovation, the “making new again” of this beautiful church.

Renovation is a good description of the message of the Scriptures today. We live in an age that is skeptical of miracles at best. We love renovations, big and small – churches, homes, parks, skylines, waterfronts, famous paintings. The miracle in today’s Gospel is a renovation. The man had been created in the image of God but – whatever went wrong, however it went wrong – he is deaf and mute. But he has friends who have heard the voice of God in Jesus’ preaching and seen the work of God in Jesus’ healing. They have faith that God not only innovates in the work of creation but renovates, too – makes things, situations, people new. They have the hope, which means “trust” more than “wish”, that Christ will renovate this man – and He does. The man is *made new*.

Isaiah sees the renovating work of God more broadly. All people and things, all creation will be made *new*. And yet our skeptical age – which greatly admires the human capacity to restore paintings, refresh polluted bodies of water, reclaim rights for the oppressed – is hesitant about miracles. Miracles are simply the tangible evidence of God’s power in Christ making things, people, situations *new*. Some are quite extraordinary...pilgrimage sites like Lourdes, where the crutches left behind are the evidence of God renovating people who were crippled. Others are more common...people who were crippled by alcoholism who have turned their lives over to God and one day at a time are living the miracle of recovery...people who were warped and twisted by anger and resentment who are renovated by forgiveness.

In a moment, bread and wine are going to be renovated – become the Body and Blood of Christ – so that He can come to us and make us new. What needs renovating in you? What’s grown weak? What’s broken? How are you deaf? What stops you from speaking? As you come before Him, listen to Him say to you, “Be opened. See, I make all things new.”