

As Jesus was leaving Jericho with his disciples, and a sizable crowd, Bartimaeus, a blind man sat by the roadside begging.

Bartimaeus has many troubles, he is blind, and he is poor. But although he is physically blind, he is not spiritually blind. For he knows he has troubles, he knows he is blind. And to know our troubles, to be in touch with our neediness, is an important spiritual insight that many lack...

Do we have this? Do we really understand how blind we are? We struggle to see God, we struggle to see and understand ourselves, we struggle to see others with compassion and understanding. Indeed, God is more present to us than anything in this world. Yet, we see all the things of this world, and still struggle to see God. Neither do we see our own dignity, or the dignity and the gift of others, yes, even the dignity of our enemies. We do not see or understand how things work together, and we struggle to see and find meaning in the events of our day. We are also blind to our sin, and we seldom understand what harm our sin actually does.

Yes, we have a great deal of blindness, we do struggle to see. But perhaps our worst blindness is it we do not even consider how blind we are. But too easily, like the Pharisees we go on thinking that we know a few things, and that therefore we know *many* things.

Consider the humility of the blind man, who knows he is blind who knows he needs help, and grace, and mercy

*On being told it was Jesus of Nazareth who was passing by, he began to cry out and say “Jesus son of David have pi***And do not miss this point that’s seeing comes paradoxically through hearing.** For faith comes by hearing, and hearing from the word of God (cf Rom 10:17). It is a truth that faith is about hearing, not seeing. For most frequently, we doubt what we see. Even if our eyes see marvels, we think, “They have a way of doing that.” No, the eye is never satisfied with seeing (cf Eccl. 1:8). Faith comes by hearing, and faith is obedience to what is heard. We walk by faith, by an inner seeing, not by physical sight.

Thus, it is by hearing that the blind man will come to see Jesus who can help them to see. He hears from others that Jesus is passing by, and he takes up the proclamation that is prescribed, “Jesus, son of David, have pity on me!”

Is it true fact, that those of us who seek to put our trust in the Lord, and call on him, will often experience rebuke, hostility, and ridicule from the world. Note that the blind man ignores all of this. And so should we. He has heard the Name above all names, who alone in heaven and earth can save, and he calls upon him.

Yes, Jesus does delay, he does not answer him right away. But the blind man persevered, calling out all the more, and eventually, Jesus stopped and said, “Call him.”

Why does God delay? This is a very deep mystery, but it is clear that one of the effects of his delay would seem to be to test our faith and strengthen it. In the end, it is not an

incantation that saves us, but faith. Simply shouting, "In the name of Jesus!" Is not enough.

But note, this man cast aside his cloak, and leaving it behind, he went to Jesus. Thus, he leaves behind perhaps the most valuable and necessary thing for his survival in this world. To miss a meal, might be inconvenient but it would not kill him. But to sleep one night, a cold night, without his cloak might well end his life through hypothermia. But leaving everything, he runs to the Lord.

But honestly, healing takes courage. The fact is, in life, most seek mere relief. True healing takes courage because it brings change, and new demands. If the blind man is healed, it would no longer be acceptable that he should sit and beg. Having been healed, more will be expected of him. His life will be irrevocably changed.

Yes, to be healed requires courage. Many of us wonder, of the Lord's delay in answering our prayers. Perhaps a question from last week's gospel is applicable as we cry to the Lord: *Do you have any idea what you are asking?* Often we do not.

Truth be told, most of us want relief more than healing. There is a big difference. The Lord is in the healing business, but most of us just want relief. Do not miss what the Lord says here. In effect, he says to the blind man, and to us, "Are you really sure you want healing?" The Lord respects us, and our freedom. He wants our consent before he goes to work. And often, though many of us think we want healing, we don't really know what we are asking. **The Lord waits, until a request makes real sense.** He knows that most of us are not always ready for what he really offers. He asks, and when our yes becomes definitive, he goes to work.

The Path that is Pursued—the text says, *Jesus told him, "Go your way; your faith has saved you." Immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus on the way.*

As we have already seen, true healing brings forth radical change. And now man who sat by the road begging, sees, but is also up and walking about. And what is he doing? He is following Jesus. For faith has saved him, and faith not only gives sight, but summons us to obedience, an obedience that has us walk in the path of the Lord.

You see, (pardon the pun), faith is more than an offer of relief. True faith instills real change. A change in direction, a change in the way we walk...appreciation of priesthood Sunday...4th Sunday of Oct is Priesthood Sunday

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The **first** key aspect of the priesthood is that it is a **vocation**, not a **career**.

The Reading tells us: "No one takes this honor upon himself, but only when **called** by God."

This reminds us that the priesthood is one of the **seven sacraments** – the sacrament of Holy Orders, which has three different levels: deacons, priests, and bishops..

- The **other** sacraments are: baptism, the Eucharist, reconciliation, confirmation, marriage, and anointing of the sick.
- Every sacrament was established by **Jesus Christ** as an **instrument** of divine grace.
- They are not merely **human** inventions.
- They are **pipelines** between heaven and earth, and God's saving grace **flows through them** in a unique, certain, powerful way.
- So no one has a “**right**” to the priesthood: it is a **gift from God** to the Church, a **sign** of his generosity and desire to be our guide and companion through life and death.

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