

30th Year B – Kinds of Blindness

Bartimaeus, the blind beggar, said: *Lord, let me see!*

That is a prayer that we can, and we should, all make, and make today.

All of the miracles that Jesus worked were outward signs.

Outward signs of what the grace of God achieves within us.

The Lord gave Bartimaeus sight:

He enabled the blind man to see – but not only with his eyes, also with his heart: to know what would be good for him: to follow the Master.

There are people we know who are blind physically to a greater or lesser degree.

But we all suffer spiritual blindness.

Because of our sinful condition, which we inherit,

and because of the sins we commit personally,

our vision of reality, and of what is truly important, is impaired.

As St Paul puts it: *We see now through a glass darkly.*

We do not clearly see God's loving presence and action in our lives.

We can easily see our troubles, but not our blessings.

We fail to notice - and seeing, seize - opportunities to care for those in need.

We look on ourselves as Christians

and yet maybe we do not give our undivided attention to Jesus once in a day.

We can become distressed by the trials of life, bewildered and at a loss, as if in a fog.

But we do not turn to Christ our light who can show us the way.

We make choices that are foolish;

we do things that are reckless;

we behave in ways that cause harm to us or to others;

we are blind to the consequences.

We can become blinkered by rage,

We can become unfocused through lust,

Envy or greed can distort our perception.

We can fail to see what is really important in life,

We can waste energy on what is inessential or peripheral,

We give our time to things of lesser or of little value.

Self-interest, and self-pity can cloud our vision.

We do not see clearly what is expected of us as human beings,

or what Jesus is asking of us as his followers, his friends.

We are able to see the faults of others plainly enough,

yet we do not perceive our own shortcomings.

We can fail to recognise these, or refuse to recognise them and correct them – even if they are pointed out to us!

In so many ways we do not see ourselves clearly, the kind of person we are.

We can be blind to the goodness around us, in other people.
We see only what is on the surface, but not what lies deeper within a person.
Our judgements can be hasty or uninformed.
We do not see things as they really are but as we have been told that they are.

And whatever age we are we can be blind to our duties and responsibilities.

We can see that something is wrong but not see that we should be doing something about it.
Maybe we can see that we should be taking some action,
but we are uncertain what direction that action should take.

We can look back with nostalgia, but be unable to face up to the present.

Perhaps we are unable to picture a better future, for ourselves or for the world, for humanity.
We can fail to have any idea as to how it might be brought about .
Our failure is a failure of the spirit – to dream and to imagine.
Moreover, we cannot see that we have a contribution to make, and what that might be.

The event narrated in the Gospel story of the blind beggar not only happened long ago.
It can take place **here and now** for us.

We are - each and all of us - **blind beggars**.

We are in need of sight, and **Jesus is passing our way** in this Mass.

We should *call out to Him* from our hearts – *Jesus, Son of David, have pity on me!*

Jesus will hear us, and call us over to him.

We must *cast off our cloak*, i.e. hide nothing from him,

We must entrust ourselves to Him just as we are.

Jesus asks us, each of us, now: *What do you want me to do for you?*

We know our blindness, in one or more of its various forms.

Which way am I failing to see?

Have we now the real desire, are we brave enough now, in this moment to say:

Lord, let me see!

Let us each summon up the courage to make that prayer from our heart of hearts!

Lord, let me see!

Jesus hears our heartfelt prayer and will act – there will be some healing among us today!

And will I *follow Jesus along the road*, wherever that road takes me?

Maybe we are daunted by the prospect -

Where will I have to go? What will the future hold?

But we will not be alone.

Jesus will take us by the hand.

Our faith in him will save us!