

Monday 33rd in Ordinary Time

Gospel text (Lk 18,35-43): When Jesus drew near to Jericho, a blind man was sitting by the road, begging. As he heard the crowd passing by, he inquired what it was, and they told him that Jesus of Nazareth was going by. Then he cried out, «Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!». The people in front scolded him, «Be quiet!», but he cried out all the more, «Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!». Jesus stopped and ordered the blind man to be brought to him, and when he came near, He asked him, «What do you want me to do for you?». And the man said, «Lord, that I may see!». Jesus said, «Receive your sight, your faith has saved you». At once the blind man was able to see, and he followed Jesus, giving praise to God. And all the people who were there also praised God.

«Your faith has saved you»

Fr. Antoni CAROL i Hostench
(Sant Cugat del Vallès, Barcelona, Spain)

Today, the blind beggar Bartimaeus (cf. Mk 10:46) gives us a complete lesson about faith, expressed with total simplicity in front of Christ. It would be good for us to repeat, every now and then, Bartimaeus' prayer: «Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!» (Lk 18:37). It is so profitable for our soul to feel destitute! Because we certainly are so though, unfortunately, very seldom are we willing to admit it. And..., consequently, we make fools of ourselves. It is for that reason St. Paul reproaches us, when he says: «For who makes you different? And what do you have that you didn't receive? But if you did receive it, why do you boast as if you had not received it?» (1Cor 4:7).

Bartimaeus is not ashamed of feeling like that. Quite often, our society, the culture of the “politically correct”, will try to shut us up: with Bartimaeus they were not able to. He did not shrink back. Despite «people (...) scolded him, ‘Be quiet!’, he cried out all the more, ‘Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!’» (Lk 18:39). What a wonderful thing! We feel like saying: —Thank you, Bartimaeus, for this example.

And it does pay to do like him, because Jesus does listen. He always listens!, no matter how much noise some may make around us. Bartimaeus' simple but complete trust —uncomplicated— disarmed Jesus and got to his heart: «and ordered the blind man to be brought to him, [and] (...) He asked him, ‘What do you want me to do for you?’» (Lk 18:40-41). Before so much faith, Jesus does not waste his time! And... neither does Bartimaeus: «Lord, that I may see!» (Lk 18:41). And, no sooner said than done: «Receive your sight, your faith has saved you» (Lk 18:42). Because, if «our faith is solid as a rock, it will also defend our home» (St. Ambrose), that is, it will overcome everything.

He is everything, He gives us everything. What else can we, then, do in his presence but give him a reply of faith? And this “reply of faith” is equivalent to “let him find us”, this God that —because of his affection for the Father— is looking for us from the very beginning. God does not impose himself against our power of choice, but often enough He comes by close enough: let us, then, learn Bartimaeus' lesson and... let us not miss him!