Thirtieth Sunday in Ordinary Time (B)

Gospel text (*Mk* 10:46-52): As Jesus was leaving Jericho with his disciples and a sizable crowd, Bartimaeus, a blind man, the son of Timaeus, sat by the roadside begging. On hearing that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out and say, "Jesus, son of David, have pity on me." And many rebuked him, telling him to be silent. But he kept calling out all the more, "Son of David, have pity on me." Jesus stopped and said, "Call him." So they called the blind man, saying to him, "Take courage; get up, Jesus is calling you." He threw aside his cloak, sprang up, and came to Jesus. Jesus said to him in reply, "What do you want me to do for you?" The blind man replied to him, "Master, I want to see." Jesus told him, "Go your way; your faith has saved you." Immediately he received his sight and followed him on the way.

"What do you want me to do for you?" The blind man replied to him, "Master, I want to see."

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Today, we reflect on a man who, in his misfortune, finds true happiness through Jesus Christ. This man suffers from two significant shortcomings: blindness and the inability to earn a living, which forces him to beg. He needs help and he is sitting by the roadside, outside Jericho, where a lot of people pass by.

In this moment of luck for him, it is Jesus who walks by, accompanied by his disciples and others. The blind man likely heard of Jesus' miracles and, upon realizing Jesus is near, begins to cry out, "Son of David, have pity on me." (Mk 10:47). For those with Jesus, his cries seem annoying, they do not think of his sad personal situation, as they are focused on themselves. But Jesus does care about the beggar and calls for him to be brought over. Immediately, the blind man stands before the Son of David and a dialogue ensues: Jesus said to him in reply, "What do you want me to do for you?" The blind man replied to him, "Master, I want to see." (Mk 10:51). Jesus grants him not only physical sight but, most importantly, spiritual vision —faith, which is the internal sight of God. St. Clement of Alexandria once said, "Let us put an end to the oblivion of the truth; let us unclothe our heart and dispel the ignorance and darkness that, as a cloud, darkens our eyes, and let us contemplate he who is really God."

Many times, we complain and say: —I do not know how to pray. The blind man from the Gospel serves as an example: he persistently calls upon Jesus and expresses all that he needs in just a few words. If we lack faith, let's say: "Lord, increase my faith." If we have family members or friends who have ceased to practice their Catholic faith, let's pray: "Lord Jesus, help them to see." Is faith really that important? When

compared to physical sight, we might realize how crucial it is. While the condition of the blind man is sad, the plight of an unbeliever is far more distressing. Let us tell them: “The Master calls you; present your need, and Jesus will generously respond.”

Thoughts on Today's Gospel

- “He who does not know the brilliance of eternal light is therefore blind. But if he has begun to believe in the Redeemer, he is sitting by the wayside. However, if he neglects to pray and fails to beseech God to recover eternal light, the blind man is in fact seated by the wayside, but he does not beg” (Saint Gregory the Great)

- "In the encounter with Christ, lived with faith, Bartimaeus regains the light he had lost, and with it the fullness of his dignity: he gets back onto his feet and resumes the journey, which from that moment has a guide, Jesus" (Benedict XVI)

- “Prayer is primarily addressed to the Father; it can also be directed toward Jesus, particularly by the invocation of his holy name: "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on us sinners."” (Catechism of the Catholic Church, n 2680)