Monday of the Thirty-third Week in Ordinary Time

Gospel text (*Lk* 18:35-43): As Jesus approached Jericho a blind man was sitting by the roadside begging, and hearing a crowd going by, he inquired what was happening.

They told him, “Jesus of Nazareth is passing by.” He shouted, “Jesus, Son of David, have pity on me!” The people walking in front rebuked him, telling him to be silent, but he kept calling out all the more, “Son of David, have pity on me!” Then Jesus stopped and ordered that he be brought to him; and when he came near, Jesus asked him, “What do you want me to do for you?” He replied, “Lord, please let me see.” Jesus told him, “Have sight; your faith has saved you.” He immediately received his sight and followed him, giving glory to God. When they saw this, all the people gave praise to God.

“Your faith has saved you”

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

Today, the blind man Bartimaeus (cf. Mk 10:46) offers us a profound lesson in faith, expressed with open simplicity before Christ. How often would it do us good to repeat Bartimaeus’s very words: "Jesus, Son of David, have pity on me!" (Lk 18:38). It is so beneficial for our soul to feel destitute! The fact is that we are, yet—sadly—we rarely truly acknowledge it. And... naturally, we make fools of ourselves. Saint Paul warns us thus: "What do you possess that you have not received? But if you have received it, why are you boasting as if you did not receive it?" (1 Cor 4:7).

Bartimaeus is not ashamed to feel this way. On more than a few occasions, society and the culture of what is “politically correct” will try to silence us: but they didn’t succeed with Bartimaeus. He did not back down. Even though they were “telling him to be silent, (...) he kept calling out all the more, ‘Son of David, have pity on me!'" (Lk 18:39). How wonderful! It makes you want to say, “Thank you, Bartimaeus, for this example.”

And it is worth doing it his way, because Jesus listens. He always listens! — no matter how much commotion others create around us. Bartimaeus' simple and unhesitating trust disarms Jesus and steals his heart: "Jesus (...) ordered that he be brought to him; and (...) Jesus asked him, 'What do you want me to do for you?'" (Lk 18:40-41). Faced with such faith, Jesus does not beat around the bush! And neither does

Bartimaeus: " Lord, please let me see'" (Lk 18:41). No sooner said than done: "Have sight; your faith has saved you" (Lk 18:42). As it turns out, "Our door is faith; if it is strong enough, the whole house is safe" (Saint Ambrose)—in other words, it is capable of anything.

He is everything; He gives us everything. So what else can we do before Him but give Him a response of faith? And this "response of faith" means "allowing ourselves to be found" by this God who—moved by His fatherly love—has always been seeking us. God does not impose Himself upon us, but He frequently passes very close to us: let us learn the lesson of Bartimaeus and... not let Him pass us by!

Thoughts on Today's Gospel

- "Through prayer we succeed in being with God. Prayer is certainty for sailors." (Saint Gregory of Nyssa)

- "When humanity's cry, like Bartimaeus', becomes stronger still, there is no other response than to make Jesus' words our own and, above all, imitate his heart. Today is a time of mercy!" (Francis)

- "Faith makes us taste in advance the light of the beatific vision, the goal of our journey here below. Then we shall see God "face to face"(1 Cor 13:12), "as he is" (Jn 3:2). So faith is already the beginning of eternal life..." (Catechism of the Catholic Church, n 163)