

Thursday of the Eighth Week in Ordinary Time

Gospel text (Mk 10,46-52): As Jesus was leaving Jericho with his disciples and a large crowd, a blind beggar, Bartimaeus, the son of Timaeus, was sitting by the roadside. On hearing that it was Jesus of Nazareth passing by, he began to call out, «Son of David, Jesus, have mercy on me!». Many people scolded him and told him to keep quiet, but he shouted all the louder, «Son of David, have mercy on me!».

Jesus stopped and said, «Call him». So they called the blind man saying, «Take heart. Get up, He is calling you». He immediately threw aside his cloak, jumped up and went to Jesus. Then Jesus asked him, «What do you want me to do for you?». The blind man said, «Master, let me see again!». And Jesus said to him, «Go your way, your faith has made you well». And immediately he could see, and he followed Jesus along the road.

«Son of David, Jesus, have mercy on me!»

P. Ramón LOYOLA Paternina LC
(Barcelona, Spain)

Today, Christ comes out to meet us. We are all just like Bartimaeus: the blind beggar, by whose side Jesus passed by, and who started to call him out until the Lord stopped and called him. We may have a more advantaged name... but our human weaknesses (moral) resemble the beggar's blindness. We cannot see either that Christ lives amongst our brothers and, thus, we treat them as we do. Perhaps, we fail to see in the social injustices, in the structures of sin, what through our eyes, is a scathing call for social commitment. Perhaps we do not fully grasp that «there is more joy in giving than in receiving», that «Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends» (Jn 15:13). What is clear looks obscure to

us: that the mirrors of the world lead to frustration, and that the paradoxes of the Gospel, after their hardships, bear fruits, fulfillment and life. We truly are visually weak, and this is not an euphemism, but a true fact: our will, weakened by the sin, dims the truth in our intelligence making us pick out what is not suitable for us.

Solution: start calling out, like the beggar, that is, humbly pray «Jesus, have mercy on me!» (Mk 10:48). And shout all the louder the more they scold you, the more they discourage you, the more you get dispirited: «Many people scolded him and told him to keep quiet, but he shouted all the louder...» (Mk 10:48). To call is also to beg: «Master, let me see again!» (Mk 10:51). Solution: to grow in our faith and beyond our certitude, trust in who loved us, created us and came to redeem us and remain amongst us in the Eucharist.

Pope John Paul II said the very same with the example of his life: his long hours of meditation —so many that his Secretary complained that he prayed “too much”— tell us clearly that «he who pray changes History».