

Commentary on the Gospel: The Prayer of the Blind Man

Gospel for the 30th Sunday in Ordinary Time (Year B), and commentary.

Mk 10:46-52

And they came to Jericho. And as Jesus was leaving Jericho with his disciples and a great crowd, Bartimaeus, a blind beggar, the son of Timaeus, was sitting by the roadside. And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out and say, “Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!”

And many rebuked him, telling him to be silent. But he cried out all the more, “Son of David, have mercy on me!” And Jesus stopped and said, “Call him.” And they called the blind man, saying to him, “Take heart. Get up; he is calling you.”

And throwing off his cloak, he sprang up and came to Jesus. And Jesus said to him, “What do you want me to do for you?” And the blind man said to him, “Rabbi, let me recover my sight.”

And Jesus said to him, “Go your way; your faith has made you well.” And immediately he recovered his sight and followed him on the way.

Commentary

On his way to Jerusalem, where our salvation is to be accomplished, Jesus

passes through a village called Jericho. And there, by the roadside, sat a blind man whose name we know: Bartimaeus. He had been begging for alms all day from those passing by. But when he hears that it is Jesus of Nazareth passing by, he begins to cry out and says, “Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!”

Jesus not only hears his cries, but he already knows perfectly well his deepest needs. On other occasions, the Master had immediately cured the sick person before him. But this time he asks, as though unsure of what he wants: “What do you want me to do for you?”

The same happens in our prayer. It is not enough to ask just once; we have to cry out, to persevere in our petition. We have to place ourselves before God even though our eyes may be blind to his nearness. And he will ask us, as he did Bartimaeus:

“What do you want me to do for you?”

The blind man's need was obvious: to see. This is what we all need: to see, to see better, to have supernatural outlook in our lives, to learn from God to look at the world with his eyes.

Our Lord restores Bartimaeus' sight so he can once again walk freely, and follow him on the way. The times of prayer in our day, amid all our daily activities, are a treasure of great value, as was Bartimaeus' encounter with Jesus as he passes by. We need to stop and call out to him, so that we can once again see clearly, and follow him more closely.

Saint Josemaría repeated those words many times in his youth: *Domine, ut videam!* Lord that I may see! And he received from God the inspiration to begin Opus Dei. He

often advised people to pray that aspiration frequently.

“Place yourself before the Lord each day and tell him slowly and in all earnestness, like the man in the Gospel who was in such great need, *Domine, ut videam!* — Lord, that I may see! That I may see what you want from me, and struggle to be faithful to you" (*The Forge*, 318).

Giovanni Vassallo / Photo: Jenny Hill - Unsplash

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(12/11/2025)