

## Thirtieth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Cycle B October 25, 2009

Readings: Jeremiah 31:7-9; Hebrews 5:1-6; Mark 10:46-52

### Ask for Clear Vision

We often have times when we struggle through life taking one day at a time. We're not really sure where we are going, and sometimes not even really sure where we are on our journey through life. We end up simply trying to survive one more day, and it's easy to lose sight of the vision ahead of us on our journey—God's promise of eternal life in heaven. And since we lose sight of our vision, we make wrong choices and turns along the way.

Sometimes we make wrong choices intentionally; we know what we ought to do but decide to do what we ought not do. This is when we are being sinful. But many other times we make bad choices because we cannot see clearly what is the right thing to do.

Maybe we don't see clearly because we don't take time to look. Our lives are so busy that we don't take the time to stop and reflect and consider what we ought to do. We simply operate in a reaction mode.

Maybe we don't see clearly because we do not want to focus on the truth—it may be inconvenient. We may not want to let ourselves be guided by the Church's teachings because it would require changes and sacrifices in our lives. It may mean accepting moral rules that would guide us to eternal happiness but might make our lives less fun. Sometimes we choose to stay in a bit of a fog so we can try to claim ignorance of God's will. For example, we might reject the Church's teaching against contraception, but refuse to read *Humanae Vitae* or take a natural family planning course to broaden our vision on the subject and give us new insights. Those in this category place obstacles that obstruct their vision; they create blind spot so that they do not see what they do not want to see.

But maybe we don't see clearly because this world we live in is a very confusing one. As hard as we try, we have difficulty finding the truth. We get conflicting messages from our Church, from our society, and from our laws. Our politicians are looking out for what is good for themselves not what is necessarily good for us or for our country, and so we cannot trust them to be our guides. We have difficulty finding the straight path to follow. Those in this category have good intentions. They want to do what is right, but their vision is obstructed.

Jesus asked Bartimaeus, the blind man in our gospel story this morning: "**What do you want me to do for you?**" Stop and ask yourself, *what do you want Jesus to do for you?* Is your answer like that of Bartimaeus: "**Master, I want to see.**" Do you fail to see because you are too busy to look where you are going? Do you fail to see clearly because you do not want to see the truth because it may be inconvenient? Or, do you innocently fail to see clearly because life today is so complicated? Often we want to do the right things in life, but we can't see clearly what it is we should do. We have blind spots and our vision is clouded by the pollution around us.

Bartimaeus gives us a wonderful example of faith and of trust in God's mercy. We see how he responds when Jesus calls him and we can compare him to the rich young

man from our gospel a couple of weeks ago. The rich young man pursued Jesus but could not give up his possessions to follow Jesus when He called. Bartimaeus, however, leapt to his feet when Jesus called him and he threw aside his cloak. He was a beggar; his cloak was probably his only possession. He was blind; he might not find it again? Was his faith so strong that he already knew he would be healed? Or maybe he just didn't care. Two weeks ago we heard that the rich man did not follow Jesus; that ***"his face fell, and he went away sad."*** He was blinded by his possessions. But today, Bartimaeus joyfully gives up what little he had to follow along the way with Jesus.

We need eyes of faith. Seeing what to do in our spiritual and moral life is more important than being able to see things of this world. Making the right choices that ensure we are on the straight path to heaven is more important than making good choices in our career or about our 401K investments.

What are your blind spots? What are the obstacles that prevent you from pursuing and finding the path that God wants you to travel? We get glasses when our eyesight fails us; when our vision becomes a little blurry. I know I'm about ready to get a stronger prescription. But what do we do when our eyes of faith do not see clearly; when our spiritual vision is out of focus? Do we notice? Do we even care?

Hopefully you notice and you care, because only then can you approach the Master in faith and humility and ask for His mercy. Only then can you approach the Master and tell him: "Master I want to see."

**Deacon Joe Hulway**