



WEEKLY GOSPEL REFLECTION



30th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Cycle B

Fr. David Rosenberg
Institute for Spiritual Direction

The healings that Jesus performs in the gospels are always a sign of the coming of the kingdom. The healing of the blind man, Bartimaeus is also a symbol of coming to faith, of learning to see as God sees. To open someone's eyes suggests opening their hearts and minds and most importantly their spiritual eyes.

In chapter eight of Mark's gospel, Jesus healed a blind man gradually, which suggested the slow growth in spiritual development that most disciples of Jesus down through the ages manifest. Here the cure is immediate, and Bartimaeus promptly becomes a disciple, following after Jesus, demonstrating that all things are possible with God. He is also the first person in Mark's gospel to call Jesus by the title "Son of David." This time Jesus does not order him to be quiet -- an indication that things are moving rapidly toward the passion, when his identity will be fully revealed.

Bartimaeus's faith and his recognition of Jesus' true identity contrast sharply with the disciples' glory seeking in last Sunday's passage.

Note that Jesus asks Bartimaeus the same question he asked James and John, "*What do you want me to do for you?*" but the response this time is much more in accord with the mission of Jesus. This week you might do well to reflect on being gifted with a deeper spiritual sight. In response to Jesus' question, "*What do you want me to do for you?*" cry out "*Lord, let me see again... with your eyes of mercy and compassion.*"

A reading from the holy gospel according to Mark.

As Jesus and his disciples
and a large crowd were leaving Jericho,
Bartimaeus son of Timaeus, a blind beggar,
was sitting by the roadside.

When he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth,
he began to shout out and say,
"Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!"
Many sternly ordered him to be quiet,
but he cried out even more loudly,
"Son of David, have mercy on me!"

Jesus stood still and said,
"Call him here."
And they called the blind man, saying to him,
"Take heart; get up, he is calling you."
So throwing off his cloak, he sprang up and came to Jesus.

Then Jesus said to him,
"What do you want me to do for you?"
The blind man said to him,
"My teacher, let me see again."
Jesus said to him,
"Go; your faith has made you well."
Immediately the man regained his sight
And followed Jesus along his way.