

REFLECTION: I remember a time when I could not see how much I and others were suffering. I remember...I remember...

Are We Blind?

30th Sunday in Ordinary Time
Cycle B | October 27, 2024



Image by Maria Laughlin

WISDOM FROM THE CELLS

I remember when I was in denial about my addiction. I refused to believe that I had a problem with alcohol and drugs. My mom tried to get me help but I always made excuses to avoid treatment until I got into big trouble, which got me a life sentence in prison because of my refusing to address my weaknesses.

I remember when I was in denial about the pain I caused my victim's family. I refused to believe I did the horrible crime I was convicted of. My being in denial turned to anger, which turned into blaming other people. It was a bad cycle to be going through. Now many lives have been altered forever.

I was in denial about my time in prison in the sense that I could not believe it was happening to me. I was in shock, my life had changed in a second. After a while I came to grasp the situation God has given me as a test of faith.

I realized I was blind in the sense that I thought the old me was completely fine. It took me getting a life sentence to realize I was a very sinful person. It took God to open my eyes to the error of my ways. The only way I could change was to accept God into my heart. And with God in my heart I will make it through everything.

-Steven, who is in a California State Prison.

PENITENTIAL RITE

**Lord, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.**
May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins and bring us to everlasting life.
R. Amen.

OPENING PRAYER

Let us pray:
God,
You are very near to us in our joys and pains. Give us the eyes of faith and love to see the mission you have given us in life and the courage and grace to carry it out. Help us to see in his light so that we can follow him on the road he shows us.

We ask this through Christ, our Lord.
R. Amen.

LAMB OF GOD

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world:
have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world:
have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world:
grant us peace.

This is Jesus, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world. Happy are we who are called to his supper.

Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.

COMMUNION

CLOSING PRAYER

Let us pray:
God,
Our loving Father, we have heard Jesus made a blind man see again. Sometimes we may feel blinded in our own lives. Give us the strength to call out to you in our pain and suffering, and make us aware of the pain and suffering of those around us.

We ask this through Christ, our Lord. **R. Amen.**



OUR FATHER

Let us pray with confidence to the Father in the words our Savior gave us:
**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy Kingdom come,
thy will be done
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those who trespass against us,
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.**
R. For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours, now and for ever. Amen.

SIGN OF PEACE

Jesus, you said to your apostles: "I leave you peace, my peace I give you. Look not on our sins, but on the faith of your Church, and grant us the peace and unity of your kingdom where you live forever and ever. **Amen.**"

The peace of the Lord be with you always.
R. And with your spirit.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

First Reading: Jeremiah 31: 7-9

Thus says the LORD: Shout with joy for Jacob, exult at the head of the nations; proclaim your praise and say: The LORD has delivered his people, the remnant of Israel. Behold, I will bring them back from the land of the north; I will gather them from the ends of the world, with the blind and the lame in their midst, the mothers and those with child; they shall return as an immense throng. They departed in tears, but I will console them and guide them; I will lead them to brooks of water, on a level road, so that none shall stumble. For I am a father to Israel, Ephraim is my first-born.

The Word of the Lord.
R. Thanks be to God.

Second Reading: Hebrews 5: 1-6

Brothers and sisters: Every high priest is taken from among men and made their representative before God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins. He is able to deal patiently with the ignorant and erring, for he himself is beset by weakness and so, for this reason, must make sin offerings for himself as well as for the people. No one takes this honor upon himself but only when called by God, just as Aaron was. In the same way, it was not Christ who glorified himself in becoming high priest, but rather the one who said to him: *You are my son: this day I have begotten you*; just as he says in another place: *You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.*

The Word of the Lord.
R. Thanks be to God.

Responsorial Psalm: Psalm 126: 1-2, 2-3, 4-5

R. The Lord has done great things for us; we are filled with joy.

When the LORD brought back the captives of Zion,
we were like men dreaming.
Then our mouth was filled with laughter,
and our tongue with rejoicing.

R. The Lord has done great things for us; we are filled with joy.

Then they said among the nations,
"The LORD has done great things for them."
The LORD has done great things for us;
we are glad indeed.

R. The Lord has done great things for us; we are filled with joy.

Restore our fortunes, O LORD,
like the torrents in the southern desert.
Those that sow in tears
shall reap rejoicing.

R. The Lord has done great things for us; we are filled with joy.

Gospel: Mark 10: 46-52

As Jesus was leaving Jericho with his disciples and a sizable crowd, Bartimaeus, a blind man, the son of Timaeus, sat by the roadside begging. On hearing that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out and say, "Jesus, son of David, have pity on me." And many rebuked him, telling him to be silent. But he kept calling out all the more, "Son of David, have pity on me." Jesus stopped and said, "Call him." So they called the blind man, saying to him, "Take courage; get up, Jesus is calling you." He threw aside his cloak, sprang up, and came to Jesus. Jesus said to him in reply, "What do you want me to do for you?" The blind man replied to him, "Master, I want to see." Jesus told him, "Go your way; your faith has saved you." Immediately he received his sight and followed him on the way.

The Gospel of the Lord.
R. Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

MEDITATION: BLINDNESS

(from the eyes of peter)

the road was steep
never liked this part
of the trip
sweating profusely
under the hot sun
side of the road

bartimaeus yells
jesus, i am over here
jesus, help me
i cannot see
jesus, help me
i yearn for vision

at that moment i knew
we would be stopping
jesus turning to me said
peter, bring me
this blind one

there were all kinds
of merchants
climbing up the hill
religious leaders
walking on
the other side
of the street
the oligarchy
being carried
down the middle
of the road
i made my way
through the throngs
of people

bartimaeus was standing
waving his arms frantically
ready to yell again
asking for help
i looked at bartimaeus
looked at how he lived
how difficult life was
the smells
the conditions
moved me

come here bartimaeus

give me your hand
i'll lead you to jesus

we walked slowly
down the hill
those being carried
stared at us
how can these leaders
be so blind?
can't they see how
the majority of
this country lives?
don't they see?
the merchants
in front making
impatient faces
as they had to
make room for
bartimaeus to pass
no contact was made
as we struggled
to climb lower

bartimaeus was
animated all his life
he had desired
some human contact
but he had become
invisible for
anyone to see
to see what is
really there

how many people
are like bartimaeus
just trying to survive
in the city?

bringing bartimaeus
to jesus
he was hurrying
even if he couldn't see

jesus reaching out
bartimaeus reaching out
their hands met

jesus touched
bartimaeus

they made contact
his face lit up
jesus asking him
what he desired
bartimaeus
responding that
he would like to see
to be whole once again
jesus putting his hands
over bartimaeus' eyes
bartimaeus' cry hung
in the air

jesus
i desire to see
help me

jesus' healing power
came from a deep place
where a strong
compassion burnt
feeling the suffering
of the poor

bartimaeus,
may you see
what really is
before you
not like those
who are blind
to the suffering people
of our country

bartimaeus
opened his eyes
he gazed into
jesus' face
smiling jubilant
he really was seeing
after all these years
but he was also seeing
something else
seeing in jesus
a vision for
compassion

in this moment
gazing into
jesus' deep eyes

bartimaeus knew
he would follow jesus
bartimaeus
knew his vision
would grow every day
by following this one

bartimaeus walked
through those gates
of the village with us
the pharisees cast
a disapproving glance
our way

bartimaeus
saying to jesus
master,
those people are blind
they live in more
darkness than i did
they think they see
they convince
all the people
that they see
but they are blind
they are leading us
further into blindness

jesus,
thank you
for letting me see
never let me go back
into darkness

to see with the eyes
with the heart
how many live
like i did?

thank you master
may others also see
have your vision
to really see
where god is
in this world

