November 18, 2019

Scripture

Luke 18:35-43
As Jesus approached Jericho
a blind man was sitting by the roadside begging,
and hearing a crowd going by, he inquired what was happening.
They told him,
"Jesus of Nazareth is passing by."
He shouted, "Jesus, Son of David, have pity on me!"
The people walking in front rebuked him,
telling him to be silent,
but he kept calling out all the more,
"Son of David, have pity on me!"
Then Jesus stopped and ordered that he be brought to him;
and when he came near, Jesus asked him,
"What do you want me to do for you?"
He replied, "Lord, please let me see."
Jesus told him, "Have sight; your faith has saved you."
He immediately received his sight
and followed him, giving glory to God.
When they saw this, all the people gave praise to God.

Our Scripture Reflection

The poor man in today’s Gospel text had not been born blind. Something had happened to him which caused him to go blind. Irregardless, when Our Lord asked him, “What do you want me to do for you?” his response is immediate and clear: “Lord, please let me see.” Because of the man’s faith his sight is restored. Isn’t it ironic, that up to this point in Luke’s Gospel, none of the disciples of Jesus, those who had been with Him day in and day out, had called Jesus by the profound title, “Son of David”? Only the “blind” had the faith to do so. Interesting.
Notice how most of Jesus’ ministry is about healing people (yet I grew up in a church that hardly used the word “healing”). Notice also how many of those healings have to do with blindness, chosen blindness (John 9:41), the gradual healing of blindness (Mark 8:22-26) and the distorted worldviews that come from chosen blindness (Luke 6:39-42). Why? Because the contemplative mind is able to see fully and freely, which is to be healed of its hurts, unforgiveness and agendas which always get in the way.

For years, I would begin my classes on the contemplative mind by repeating the same sentence twice: “Most people do not see things as they are because they see things as they are!” Which is not to see at all. Their many self-created filters keep them from seeing with any clear vision. The whole of life is almost perfectly calibrated to get you out of your own way, which is normally achieved by having to give up control or through a persistent sadness, pain or fear. Notice how the blind people invariably cry out to Jesus, “Lord have pity on me” (Luke 18:39). From our pitiable state, what the recovery movement calls “powerlessness,” we can often recognize that we are our own worst enemy, and from that humiliation, we can learn how to see and love things as they are — and not just as we want them to be.


A Prayer from the Heart

Dear Jesus, I get so invested in living life that I so often forget about You. I fail to see Your Presence all around me. Open my eyes in faith to recognize Your Presence all around, especially in Your Holy Word and Your Sacraments. Thank You, Lord, for being so close to me. Amen