

**ECHOING GOD’S WORD
IN
THE CATHOLIC FAITH COMMUNITY
THIRTIETH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME**

October 27, 2024

SCRIPTURES:

Jeremiah 31:7-9 53:10-11	God promises to restore that which God has made.
Hebrews 5:1-6	The priesthood of Christ is not limited by time.
Mark 10:46-52	Jesus does the work of God: Restoring creation.

SCRIPTURE BACKGROUND:

Jeremiah:

A few dates may be helpful:

- Around 1800 B.C.E. (Before the Common Era): Abraham
- 1250 B.C.E.: Moses
- 1000 B.C.E.: King David
- 587-539 B.C.E.: Babylonian Exile
- 539-333 B.C.E.: Restoration
- 333-63 B.C.E.: Greek Period
- 63 B.C.E. to 135 C.E.: Roman Period.

Situating the prophets within Jewish history gives perspective to their ministry. The prophet Jeremiah lived and served in Jerusalem during the period leading up to the Exile (587). Even in the midst of this horrendous collapse of the Jewish society, he promises a restoration, a regathering of God’s people, a new Exodus more wonderful than the first. The Church today likes to hear a promise of God’s intervention on its behalf in these same words.

Hebrews:

This early Christian writer affirms that the high priesthood of Jesus is superior to that of the Aaronic priesthood that served the Temple of Jerusalem. Like the Levites, Jesus is chosen by God, but unlike them, Jesus is sinless and therefore more efficacious in his sacrifice.

Mark:

The Gospel of Mark gives us two healings of the blind: one of the blind man from Bethsaida (8:22-26) and now the healing of Bartimaeus. These two miracles of restoration of sight serve as a framework for predictions of the Passion and the emerging faith of the disciples in the resurrection of Jesus. “Framing” serves as a literary device to highlight and to interpret what comes in the center. These men gain their physical ability to see while the disciples are called to

the spiritual insight of faith in Jesus Christ.

The suffix “bar” in the name “Bar-Timaeus” literally means “son of.” Here, “son of Timaeus.” “Son of David” serves to identify Jesus as messiah. “Your faith has healed you” also means “Your faith has saved you.”

Isn't it interesting that the man who is blind can see what those sighted people around him cannot see: that Jesus is the messiah. The point is not lost on the people for whom Mark was writing, nor on us! Those who are in greater need are the ones who dare to call out and ask for support and for help. Often, we have to be in deepest need before we are aware of our helplessness. The “blind” can “see” better than the “sighted.”

Those closest to Jesus certainly were not very welcoming to the pleas of the blind man. Only when they were assured that Jesus was indeed calling the man to himself did they decide to cooperate. Are we not too protective of those “inside” the Church so that we fail to welcome even those whom Jesus himself is calling? We are not best known for our hospitality, are we?

Some of us in the Church, at times, pretend that we are the only ones for whom Jesus was a concern. We act as if Jesus cannot even hear the cries of those who are not like us. Or, we say, “Do not bother the Master with your stuff. It's not really important to him.”

We have to be willing to let go of something very important to us if we are truly sincere about going to the Lord Jesus. Notice: the blind man even abandons his coat! We surely will have to give up something we consider valuable if we mean it when we run up to Jesus and ask to be heard.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. What could you do as a class to make sure that other youth feel welcome in your meetings, in your activities, in your projects? Do you sometimes act as if God is not really interested in others, only in you? Do you realize that others will not know they are welcome unless you make them feel welcome? Do you understand that God's hospitality is expressed through your hospitality?

2. What suggestions do you have for making your parish more concerned about the needs of people who do not now belong to the Church? How can your parish be seen as eager to listen to the call of people? Are we perceived as a group who really care? Are we truly willing to listen to people?

3. Comment on the phrase that says that Bartimaeus “threw aside his cloak” in his eagerness to come to Jesus. Do you realize that the cloak was most likely the only possession the man had? Surely, he will need it when nightfall comes. It gets cold at night in the Middle East. What does this say about Bartimaeus' confidence that he would recover his sight?

PRAYER

Almighty and ever-living God,
strengthen our faith, hope, and love.
May we do with loving hearts
what you ask of us
and come to share the life you promise.

Opening Prayer: 30th Sunday in Ordinary Time

CATHOLIC DOCTRINE

Our prayer most often begins in the midst of distress and in an awareness of acute need. We become aware of our dependence on God when we have exhausted all other alternatives. Through faith, we have heard that Jesus has power to heal and to save us in our distress. We call out from afar, often thinking that God is quite distant from us. But who can stop us from calling out when the need is so great?

Without even having yet called out to the Lord, we were healed of alienation and blindness when we were called by God to fellowship in the Church, to baptism, and to the forgiveness of our sins. If we have been given this greatest of all gifts without having had to ask, will we not also receive whatever we ask for in faith?

The Church strives never to forget the eagerness of the Lord to save us from eternal death. The community of faith becomes a living witness to the fact that Jesus keeps inviting people to come to him in their every need. "What do you want me to do for you?"

The prayer of the Church is from the body of Christ, still in the world, calling out in supplication to the heavenly Father. When the Church prays, it is Christ who prays. The Father will always listen to the Beloved Son in whom God is always pleased. We can trust that the prayers of the Church on our behalf will surely be heard by God.

Some are shy and hesitate to pray when they are in deep need because they have been neglectful about praying when they were not in need. No need to hesitate. We still honor God when we pray, whether we are in need or not. It is still an act of faith in the power and the love of God that we should turn to God in our neediness.

We pray in good times and in bad. We recognize God's majesty and power, no matter what the circumstances may be. God loves us even when we have forgotten to pray. God is not forgetful of us even when we are forgetful of God. We can always come back. We begin by saying that we are sorry to have neglected to pray.

See: The Catechism # 2850-2854

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