

Homily: 30th Sunday: Cycle B: 2024: Jer 31: 7-9; Ps 126; Heb 5: 1-6; Mk 10: 46-52

“Turning to the Lord for Help like the Blind Man in the Gospel”

1. **The Gospel today gives us a model of how we should turn to the Lord and ask for His help.** This applies to us both as individuals and as a community. As the blind man cried out so should we, *“Jesus, son of David, have pity on me.”* **The first step** to receiving the graces God wants to give us - *to be holy, to turn away from sin, to help us in our daily struggles* - is to acknowledge humbly that we need His help. Like the people surrounding the blind man, there will always be people who tell us not to cry out to the Lord, but to be quiet. Do we allow others to intimidate us? Or do we persist in our Faith despite outward opposition? The Catholic Church is often criticized for taking a strong stand on moral and spiritual issues, be it on defense of human life, particularly the life of the pre-born children and the terminally ill from the evils of abortion and euthanasia, to the call to always be open to the gift of human life in marriage by rejecting the contraceptive/sterilization mentality of our culture, to the defense of marriage only between one man and one woman, to teaching against war, to standing up for the care of refugees and the homeless and all those rejected and marginalized by our society (while at the same time proclaiming we need to have good laws and order, so that our country is safer) - always reminding people in all ways that **a culture of violence is never a solution for human problems.** In the face of all this selfishness & death and a culture often opposed to the beauty of our Catholic faith, we need to both pray and take action to witness to the Lord of Life.
2. **There is always a temptation to give up or give in if we face opposition.** To take the easy way out, to just *“to go along to get along”*, and to give in to human respect. But where will that get us in regard to our eternal destiny to be with God, which will only come about if we are faithful to the Lord and His teaching - made known to us through our Catholic faith in this life? In the end, we will be seen as foolish and possibly lose our soul - if we denied our Faith in serious matters. That is where a life of **prayer** comes in. Prayer or dialog with God is the means **both** to obtain divine favor but also the strength we need to persevere in the face of opposition. The blind man, despite others, today kept calling out to Jesus, and Jesus eventually heard him,

and said to him, “*What do you want me to do for you?*” And he replied, “*Master, I want to see.*” **Do we want to see** - to see things as God does rather than as the world does? To live in the truth which alone will set us free? Living in God’s truth leads to **the Cross** in this world, but it will also lead to **the Resurrection** someday, and a joy and peace beyond imagining! But right now, on earth **we must fight the good fight**, and to do that we first need to pray for the courage to live our Faith fully and to always witness in the public sphere to the truth of our Catholic Faith with integrity.

3. Jesus says to the blind man, “***Go on your way, your faith has saved you.***” Then the Gospel says, “*Immediately he received his sight, and followed Him on the way.*” **To follow Jesus on the way means to live Jesus’s new life and to turn away from those ways of the world which are at odds with the ways of God.** To receive our sight means that the Lord heals both our inward and outward blindness. Most people are not blind outwardly – but tragically because of sin we are often spiritually blind in our soul, in our mind, and heart. **Only by rooting our life in the Lord can that blindness be lifted over time.** We must never lose heart when combating the powers of evil and sin in our own life or in the life of our country. **The spiritual victory is only won by patience and humility.** And it is by perseverance, generosity, the confession of our sins in the Sacrament, and regular reverent reception of Holy Communion that we eventually gain victory over the world, the flesh and the devil. To acknowledge that we need God’s help is the first step as the blind man shows us today. There is someone else who can show us how to love the Lord and respond to Him the right way, and that is **the Blessed Mother**, whose motto is: *Let it be done to me according to your Word, Lord*, as we know from the Annunciation. As we close out October, the month along with May that the Church honors Mary in a special way, we are encouraged to daily pray a set of the mysteries of her Holy Rosary, the most powerful prayer next to the Holy Mass. Remember, too, the Virgin Mary is the patroness of our country, so let’s ask her to intercede for each of us and our country to turn more to the Lord daily and to receive His healing in all the areas of life we need healing in, as individuals and as a nation. And through her prayers may we live and witness to our Catholic faith with more faithfulness in this dire time. God bless you. †