

30th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Cycle B

Jeremiah 31:7-9

Psalms 126:1-2, 2-3, 4-5, 6

Hebrews 5:1-6

Mark 10:46-52

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In our Gospel, Jesus restores the sight of the blind beggar Bartimaeus. The history of all times and places is replete with examples of blind people who have lived full, rewarding lives. *Spiritual* blindness, on the other hand, is always an unmitigated disaster. It is clear that Jesus also cures Bartimaeus of this, more injurious, form of blindness, for the first thing Bartimaeus does when his sight is restored is to see Jesus, and follow him up the road. There can be no greater evidence of clarity of spiritual vision. We too, if our spiritual vision is clear, can want no more than to *see* our Savior, and *follow* him.

Even those of us who are blessed with physical sight, often need to wear glasses to correct and enhance our vision. The same is true of our spiritual vision. Alas, spiritual spectacles are not covered by most insurance plans. Fortunately our Savior, as Bartimaeus learned to his joy, is eager to serve as our spiritual optometrist. Like Bartimaeus, we need only express our need to Jesus, and he will give us the spiritual vision of eagles. Our need is not so much for sight, but for insight. God's grace gives us the insight to see our Lord all around us, loving us, supporting us, and urging us on. We remember Jesus' words in Matthew's Gospel: The lamp of the body is the eye. If your eye is sound, your whole body will be filled with light; but if your eye is bad, your whole body will be in darkness. And if the light in you is in darkness, how great will the

darkness be.” Christ is our light, “the light of the world, and whoever follows him will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.” With our sight restored we can obey Jesus’ command to let our light shine before others, “that they may see your good deeds and glorify your heavenly Father.”

Jesus even describes how the treatment works: “Why do you notice the splinter in another’s eye, but do not perceive the wooden beam in your own eye? How can you say to another, ‘Let me remove the splinter from your eye,’ while the wooden beam is in your eye? You hypocrite, remove the wooden beam from your eye first; then you will see clearly to remove the splinter from another’s eye.” When, by God’s grace, the lumber has been removed from our eyes, we begin to see the Lord everywhere: in God’s creation, in works of human genius, and especially in the hungry, the thirsty, the stranger, the naked, the ill, and the imprisoned. It takes some practice to see with our new eyes. And if, for the moment, we are blind to Christ’s presence, we must allow ourselves to be led by those who can see more clearly. Another time they may rely on us for guidance. That is one of the reasons that we gather together in worship. Another reason, of course is to see our Lord in the bread and wine we offer in the Eucharist. It is an ideal opportunity to ask our God for eyes with which to truly see.