

**CLOSING PRAYER:**

**~ A Prayer for Autumn ~**

God of all seasons,  
we thank you for Autumn.

We thank you  
for the touch of coolness in the air  
that gives us a new burst of energy.

We thank you  
for the coloring of trees  
that shows the creativity  
of the Divine Artist.

We thank you for  
the falling leaves  
that reveals the strength of the branches.

We thank you  
for the hues of fields  
that brings peace to our souls.

We thank you  
for the smiles on pumpkins  
that bring joy to children.

We thank you  
for the fall harvest  
which brings us gratitude  
for the bounty of our land.

We thank you  
for this change of seasons  
that reveals the circle of life.

God of all seasons,  
as you transform the earth,  
transform us by your Spirit.  
Amen.

**CAMPUS MINISTRY OFFICE:**

The Campus Ministry Office is located in **Our Lady Chapel**.

phone: [440] 473-3560 or 216-570-9276 [cell]. e-mail: blazekj@gilmour.org

# Our Lady Chapel



*Our Lady Chapel is a Roman Catholic community founded in the love of the Father, centered in Christ, and rooted in the Holy Cross tenets of building family and embracing diversity. We are united in our journey of faith through prayer and sacrament, and we seek growth through the wisdom of the Holy Spirit in liturgy and outreach, while responding to the needs of humanity.*

**SATURDAY EVENING MASS:**

Our attendance at Saturday Evening Mass is sparse and inconsistent. We need either of these 2 adjectives to be corrected in order to demonstrate that our 5 PM Mass is viable for our Chapel Community. Attendance over the past 3 weeks has been 12, 6 and 12 respectively. We will continue to monitor our attendance and then make a decision. God bless you.

**FAITH EDUCATION FOR OUR CHILDREN:**

I know many of you have been wondering why we haven't begun Faith Education Classes yet, as they normally begin after Labor Day. We have had an issue with getting commitments from instructors. Much of this is COVID based. So here is what we have decided to do for this year. **Faith Education Class will begin on Sunday, November 7<sup>th</sup>. Grades 2 and 8 — both sacramental years — will meet in person** in order to properly prepare children for reception of the Sacraments of Reconciliation, Eucharist, and Confirmation. In person classes will meet on Sunday mornings from 8:45 AM until 9:45 AM; this schedule will help to connect class time with Mass attendance as Mass begins at 10 AM in the Chapel.



**All other classes will be home schooled.** St. John's Cathedral is using this model with great success, and it proved to be viable for us during the pandemic. **For our home schooled students, Patty, my long-time office associate, will prepare the worksheets for the month, parents will pick up the worksheets and return them to the chapel office. If further assistance is needed for any Child, Father John will provide assistance.**

We apologize for the delay in Faith Education this year. We feel that this course of action will truly enable families to become more involved in the Faith Education of their children. **If you have any questions, or if you would like to enroll your child in our program, please contact Patty or Father John in the chapel office [440-473-3560].**

**WOMEN'S EVENING ZOOM RETREAT — SAVE THE DATE:**

**Tuesday, October 26<sup>th</sup> from 6:30 PM – 8:30 PM,** we will hold a Women's Evening of Reflection and Sharing **via zoom.** It has been several years since we have been able to host a Women's Fall Retreat, so we are excited to present this opportunity — even though it will only be by zoom. All Women of Our Lady Chapel and Gilmour Academy — and their guests and friends — are invited to join us for this retreat. **Father John** will facilitate our evening of reflection. **Father John will be sending out the zoom link to those who have registered.** So **mark the date on your calendars** and give yourself a treat in the Lord. Please **call Patty in the chapel office [440-473-3560] to register.**

**MEN'S EVENING ZOOM RETREAT — SAVE THE DATE:**

**Thursday, November 11<sup>th</sup> from 6:30 PM – 8:30 PM,** we will hold a Men's Evening of Reflection and Sharing **via zoom.** It has been several years since we have been able to host a Men's Fall Retreat, so we are excited to present this opportunity — even though it will only be by zoom. All Men of Our Lady Chapel and Gilmour Academy — and their guests and friends — are invited to join us for this retreat. **Father John** will facilitate our evening of reflection. **Father John will be sending out the zoom link to those who have registered.** So **mark the date on your calendars** and give yourself a treat in the Lord. Please **call Patty in the chapel office [440-473-3560] to register.**

**IMPORTANT TO KNOW:**

The most common way people give up their power is by thinking they don't have any. —Alice Walker

**PRAYER REQUESTS:**

Jesus calls us to pray for one another. Please keep all these people in your prayers.

**PRAYERS FOR THE SICK:**

- For Gregg Thompson, husband of Jill, who is ill.
- For Daniel Hernandez, father of Patsy Schauer, who is ill.
- For Vicki Giancola, mother of Vince Giancola ['23], who continues treatment for cancer.
- For Liam Kirchner, a child, who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For Joseph Borkey ['82], brother of Jeff ['80] and Jerrod ['87] Borkey, father of Christian Borkey ['16], and uncle of Jerrod ['12] and former Gilmour student, Ian Borkey, who is recovering from cancer surgery.
- For Terry Lahey, who is critically ill with supranuclear palsy.
- For Albert Abramovitz, grandfather of Matt Chiancone ['17], who is critically ill as a result of cancer.

**FOR THE DECEASED:**

- For June Kristofelc.
- For William Breck
- For Anthony DiCicco, father of Anthony ['79], Nick ['82], and Domenic ['85] DiCicco.
- For Devan Bogard
- For Shannon Reynolds
- For Margret Kachik, aunt of Jill Thompson
- For Marie Thielman, grandmother of Claire Thielman ['24]
- For John Schenkelberg ['71], father of Craig Schenkelberg ['16], and uncle of Katherine ['89], Elizabeth ['92], Lisa ['98], Rick ['02], Colleen ['13], Sam ['19] Schenkelberg, and brother of Bob ['62], Charlie ['63], and Rich ['69] Schenkelberg.
- For Thomas Lawler.
- For Virginia DiPuccio, mother of Dominic DiPuccio ['82], and grandmother of Dominic ['14], Matthew ['17], Sophia ['19], Armand ['19], Lena ['20], Michael ['22], and Izzy ['25] DiPuccio.

**PRAYERS FOR OTHERS:**

- For a family going through a difficult time.
- For an end to violence and racial injustice in our society.
- For a growth in awareness of the blessing of family life.
- For all those struggling with various addictions.
- For an end to sexual abuse and lack of respect for human persons.
- For a greater respect for human life, from the moment of conception until natural death.
- For all caregivers.
- For all service men and women serving our country, and for their families.
- For a greater awareness of our call to create a more humane and just society.

**SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION:**

Father John is available to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation with you. Please call him [440-473-3560] to arrange for this experience. All social distancing will remain in place. Always remember the Lord's invitation: "I will give them a heart with which to understand that I am the Lord. They shall be my people and I will be their God, for they shall return to me with their whole heart". [Jeremiah 24:7].



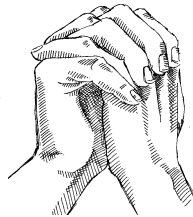
Reconciliation

**PRAYER REQUESTS:**

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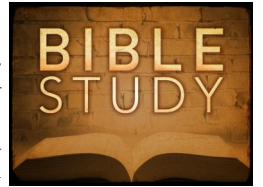
**PRAYERS FOR THE SICK:**

- For Dorothy Dowling, grandmother-in-law of Whitney Daley, great-grandmother of Thomas [\*27], Mark [\*30] and Joseph [\*32] Daley, who is critically ill and under the care of hospice.
- For Tammi Ramsey who is in rehab
- For Will Chadwick [\*22], brother of Alex Chadwick [\*25], who is recovering from surgery.
- For Ernie DeChellis, father of Elizabeth DeChellis [\*24], who is undergoing medical testing
- For Katie Poelking [\*01], sister of TJ Poelking [\*98], who is undergoing treatment for breast cancer.
- For Julia Johnson, grandmother of Mikayla [\*23] and Michael [\*26] Fannin, who is undergoing treatment following a heart attack.
- For Mary Goers who is undergoing treatment for pancreatic cancer.
- For Serena DiCillo, daughter of David DiCillo [\*84] and Polly Duval DiCillo [\*84], and granddaughter of long-time Gilmour teacher, m Bonnie DiCillo, and niece of John [\*83], Dawn [\*86], and Dan [\*88] DiCillo and Laurie Duval Muller-Girard [\*81], who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For Ray Gruss who is battling cancer.
- For John Weathers, who is undergoing treatment for liver cancer.
- For Bruce Schwartz, who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For Bill Barrett, who is undergoing treatment for pancreatic cancer.
- For David Patterson [\*83], brother of Charles [\*79] and Neil [\*81] Patterson, who is undergoing medical treatment.
- For Mary Curran, mother of Megan [\*10], Carolyn [\*12], and Catherine [\*17] Curran, who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For John Zippay, who is critically ill.
- For Addison McKito, sister of Aidan McKito [\*24], who is undergoing treatment for Hodgkin’s Lymphoma.
- For Darlene Lonardo, mother of Joseph Lonardo [\*00], and grandmother of Angelina [\*22] and Giana [\*22] Lonardo, who is undergoing treatment for leukemia.
- For Jill Shemory, mother of Adam Shemory [\*08], who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For Christine Maharg, mother of Lily Maharg [\*21], who is seriously ill with cancer.
- For Dave Howard, uncle of Gilmour Art instructor, Susan Southard, who is battling cancer.
- For Brian Fitzgerald, who is seriously ill with brain cancer.
- For Margaret Malarney [\*24] who continues rehab and medical care.
- For Bernice Girgash, aunt of Basketball Coach and Counselor, Dan DeCrane, who is undergoing treatment for cancer..
- For Krishna Gupta, Sister of Science teacher, Neena Goel, aunt of Nikhil [\*13] and Nupur [\*17] Goel, who is undergoing treatment for a brain bleed
- For Tara Hyland [\*07], who is undergoing treatment for cancer.
- For Karuna Singla, Sister-in-law of Science teacher, Neena Goel, aunt of Nikhil [\*13] and Nupur [\*17] Goel, who is undergoing treatment for bone cancer.
- For Melita Chiacchiari, mother of Mark [\*94], mother-in-law of Michelle DeBacco [\*96] who is undergoing further treatment for cancer.
- For Mike Heryak, husband of Janet, father of Lillian [\*09], Rosa [\*12] and Edwin [\*17] Heryak, who is seriously ill
- For Tom Podnar, father of Lower School art teacher, Eileen Sheehan, who is awaiting a heart transplant.
- For Father James Caddy, former pastor of St. Francis, who is undergoing treatment for cancer.



**NEXT BIBLE STUDY — WEDNESDAY, OCT. 27<sup>th</sup>:**

**Our next Virtual Bible Study will be on Wednesday, October 27<sup>h</sup> at 6:30 PM.** Bible Study continues to meet bi-weekly. The Bible Study is open to everyone — all middle and high school students, college students, young adults, and all adults. We will all come together to be enriched by God’s word. It’s a great time, and a good witness of our faith to others. If you can’t come at 6:30, come when you can. Gather your favorite snack and/or drink, but be prepared to be nourished on God’s word. **Our topic for this Bible Study will be: Since when is Sanctity spooky?**



**If you text or email Father John [blazekj@gilmour.org] he will send you the zoom link and password. This is an important step to prevent negative intruders.**

We also need your help — we need future topics. **So, if you have a topic that you would like us to discuss, please let Father John know.** Mark your calendars and be part of this wonderful activity that will deepen your spiritual journey. **We will meet every other week — topic to be decided at the end of the previous meeting.** Join us. You’ll have a blast, and celebrate your faith along the way..

**SCHEDULE FOR THE WEEK:**

|   |                                  |
|---|----------------------------------|
| Sunday, October 24:<br>30 <sup>th</sup> Week in Ordinary Time   | 10:00 AM In Person & Live Stream |
| Monday, October 25:   | 4:15 PM [Eucharistic Chapel]     |
| Tuesday, October 26:  | NO MASS                          |
| Wednesday, October 27:  | NO MASS                          |
| Thursday, October 28:<br>Sts. Simon and Jude                    | 4:15 PM [Eucharistic Chapel]     |
| Friday, October 29:<br>St. John Paul II                         | 4:15 PM [Eucharistic Chapel]     |
| Saturday, October 30:<br>31 <sup>st</sup> Week in Ordinary Time | 5:00 PM In Person only           |
| Sunday, October 31:<br>31 <sup>st</sup> Week in Ordinary Time   | 10:00 AM In Person & Live Stream |

**PASSIONATELY IN LOVE WITH GOD:**

All the great saints in history about whom I have read have been people who were so passionately in love with God that they were completely free to love other people in a deep, affective way, without any strings attached. True charity is gratuitous love, a love that gives gratuitously and receives gratuitously. It is following the first commandment that asks us to give everything we have to God and that makes the second commandment truly possible.

We are touching here on the source of much of the suffering in our contemporary society. We have such a need for love that we often expect from our fellow human beings something that only God can give, and then we quickly end up being angry, resentful, lustful, and sometimes even violent. As soon as the first commandment is no longer truly the first, our society moves to the edge of self-destruction.

—Henri Nouwen

**REFLECTION ON THE THEME FOR THE WEEK:**

At the ripe age of 10, my friends and I probed some deep philosophical questions. One question that stands out is: “If you had to choose between seeing, hearing, or speaking, which one could you not live without?” More often than not, seeing was the one we were all most afraid of losing and for some very interesting reasons. If you could not hear, then you would not have to listen to your mom tell you to clean up your room. And if you could not speak, you would not get called upon in class to answer a tough question. But if you could not see, well then, what would Christmas be like or not being able to play baseball? To my band of philosophers, the benefits of seeing were, just plain and simple, overwhelming.

And so it was with Bartimaeus [Mark 10:46-52]. Blind, possibly from birth, he had but one fervent desire: “Master I want to see.” Because of Bartimaeus’ unwavering faith, Jesus answered his prayer with the words we all know so very well: “Go your way; your faith has saved you.” And in that instant the eyes of Bartimaeus were opened, and all the wonderful sights of the world around him were made real.

Our Scripture Readings for this 30<sup>th</sup> Week in Ordinary Time opens with the Prophet Jeremiah. Jeremiah is usually doomful and pointy of finger. But his words for us today are much the opposite [Jeremiah 31:7-9] — there is shouting for joy and promises of reestablishment of the homeland, and the unity of separated nations as well as a unity of religion under the One God of David. The exile will end, tears will be replaced by brooks of water. The blind will not stumble along the level road, nor the mothers with their children. This is the “second exodus” — the scattered will console each other in their reunion. For years, God has been protesting His everlasting divine love for Israel. God had pleaded with them to shed the bonds of their hearts and orient their lives. Now the Lord will free them to be once more the People of God.

Mark’s gospel [10:46-52] is a very simple story — a “blind man” recovers and becomes a “man who was blind”. The man throws off the name “Blind Man” by throwing off his cloak and following Jesus on the way”.

What led up to this action? Prior to this, Jesus had been confronted by the Pharisees about divorce; then Jesus reminded everyone that they needed to have the hearts and souls of children; then came the man who turned out to be too rich and had too many things binding him down and he could not follow Jesus; and finally, Jesus showed the disciples that being first or the greatest had everything to do with being a servant, and not with “being in charge”.

This story is very similar to the story of the blind man in the Gospel of John [see John 9]. In the story, the blind man can see, but the Pharisees remain bound up and unable to see Jesus and what Jesus was getting at.

Mark’s blind man ends up seeing Jesus as He is. The “blind man” is freed from his unrelationality. The crowds relate to him according to the negative adjective — “blind”. But the man is not a part of the crowd — he is apart, sitting by himself. The crowds try to hush him up, when he shouts towards what he has heard. Jesus deals with him in on a personal level — “What do you want me to do for you?” Mark wants his readers to yearn for the truth which is Jesus. Jesus wants to give the man — and us — what is good for us, and that is a freedom to live as loved and redeemed creatures. Jesus wants to give us a sight of who He says we are in His sight.

People who are blind from birth — or who received this gift early in their lives — do not know what they look like. Nobody can tell them exactly either. They can touch their faces and bodies, but that data is insufficient for grateful acceptance. Then there are those who can see themselves, but find gratitude



The Healing of the Blind Bartimaeus by Harold Copping

generous, capable of much, but able to do only as much as others would accept from him. That is how he was Godlike.

The awesome truth of this is that we hold the power to allow Christ to be our shepherd king, our “rabboni” — or simply an image on a holy card. Bartimaeus moved from asking Jesus to be the healing shepherd king to allowing him to be the teacher who would lead him down the road to total self-giving. As we draw toward the last weeks of our liturgical year, Bartimaeus and the Letter to the Hebrews ask two key questions: “Who do we allow God and Christ to be for us?” and, “What does this call us to do?”

—taken from the writings of Sister Mary McGlone, C.S.J., which appear on the internet

**SERVING THE LORD IN THE POOR — NOVEMBER 20<sup>th</sup>:**

Our Savior Lutheran Church, across the street from Gilmour, has a Food Pantry which distributes food to the community on the **third Saturday of each month**. They welcome volunteers. If you want to volunteer, they have instituted some **new procedures** because of the Coronavirus. **Thus they help pre-pack nonperishables in bags on Thursday evening beginning at 5 PM.** They continue this prepacking on Friday if needed. Check with Elina Gurney on this. **On Saturday morning at 9 AM, they need help putting items from the foodbank into the prepacked bags.** Only volunteers will be allowed in the Church building, so you will be protected against the virus. Clients will remain outside in their cars. **The food pantry is then open from 9:30 AM—1:30 PM on Saturday.**

Our Savior Lutheran’s Food Pantry was formed to serve those in emergency situations and/or with on-going need in the cities of Mayfield Heights, Mayfield Village, Highland Heights and Gates Mills. The Food Pantry respects social and cultural diversity and upholds the worth and dignity of those it serves. All those in the area with need will be served equally, as supplies allow. The food pantry is a member of the Greater Cleveland Food Bank.

**Please let Elina Gurney know if you would like to help. You can do this through the chapel office [440-473-3560] or by emailing Elina Gurney at [gurney.oh@gmail.com](mailto:gurney.oh@gmail.com).** In this critical time, this is a wonderful way to serve others. Please consider this opportunity.

**NOVENA TO BLESSED BASILE MOREAU:**

Blessed Basile Moreau was the founder of the Congregation of Holy Cross, to which Fr. John and the Brothers at Gilmour belong. We have two booklets with Novenas to Blessed Basile Moreau. One is used for a personal intention or healing; the other is used when praying for the intention or healing of someone other than yourself. The Novenas were composed by Father Thomas Looney, C.S.C. Many have received blessings and healings through the intercession of Blessed Basile Moreau, and now we want to extend this invitation to you and your family. Please see Father John and he will be glad to give you the booklets.

**EUCCHARISTIC MINISTERS:**

We are currently discerning a new group of Eucharistic Ministers who would undergo training within the next month. If you feel that the Lord is calling you to this ministry, we would be delighted to include you in that ministry here at Our Lady Chapel. Both adults and teens [must be a Senior in High School] are welcome to participate in this very special ministry. We are in need of ministers for both our Saturday evening and Sunday morning Masses. **Contact Father John or the chapel office [440-473-3560] if you feel called to this ministry.** We are always in need of Eucharistic Ministers.

**THE JOURNEY:**

Love allows us to flow together toward a shared future.

—Adrienne Maree Bown



**WHAT IS WAS LIKE TO BE JESUS:**

Some ask: “What was Jesus like?” The Letter to the Hebrews takes on a different question: “What was it like to be Jesus?” Stained glass windows, art, homilies and books about Jesus rarely explore what it might have been like to be a human being exploring the vocation to be the unique son of God incarnate. The author of Hebrews tells us that Jesus did not take his vocation on himself, but was called by God [Hebrews 5:1-6].

How did he know to what God had called him? We hear of two great epiphanies — one when John baptized Jesus [see Mark 1:11], and the other on the mountain of the transfiguration [see Mark 9:7]. Yet, in each, Jesus heard only that he was God's own son — the same thing God had said to Israel. How then, did Jesus know who he was called to be and what he was called to do?

The story of Bartimaeus is the last healing described in Mark's Gospel. In the first healing [see Mark 1:21-28], Jesus expelled an evil spirit who called him “Jesus of Nazareth, the holy one of God.” What a title! It was perfectly designed to engender pride without demanding anything in the way of love. When Bartimaeus heard that Jesus of Nazareth was passing by, he called him: “Son of David” — a title that recalled the vocation of a shepherd king, the person responsible to care for God's flock. The demons tempted Jesus with status, Bartimaeus begged for action.

As Mark tells it, Bartimaeus kept calling out to Jesus. Over and over again he asked for mercy — using the Greek word we use when we sing *Kyrie eleison*. Eleison — mercy — does not seek alms or sympathy, but rather a powerful sort of solidarity; it's a mercy that impels one to act on behalf of someone who needs help. While the crowd tried to silence Bartimaeus, Jesus told them to call him to come forward. Then, investing the beggar with all the dignity of an honored client, Jesus invited him to speak for himself — to say exactly what it was that he wanted. Without hesitation Bartimaeus answered: “Rabboni, I want to see.”

There, in front of the disciples and surrounding crowds, Bartimaeus had pronounced his creed. He called Jesus of Nazareth the Son of David, thus acknowledging his role in the history of their people. Calling him rabboni — translated in our scriptures as master — Bartimaeus, like Mary of Magdala in the garden, recognized Jesus as the highest-ranking teacher one could find.

By calling Jesus “rabboni”, Bartimaeus indicated that he was asking for more than eyesight, thus his dialogue with Jesus carries a variety of meanings. Jesus told Bartimaeus saying: “Go your way, your faith has saved you.” Mark explains that as a result, Bartimaeus made Jesus' way his own; he joined Jesus on the road to Jerusalem where the cross and resurrection would reveal the true meaning of the titles Jesus bore.

In the great revelations at his baptism and on the mountain, Jesus heard himself called Son of God. He would learn how that role called him to overcome the demonic and to fulfill the hopes of those who searched for God. Jesus embodied a threat to demonic powers — to all that trapped people in mental and physical illness, all that led authorities to act like dictators rather than shepherds, to all the egoism and self-protecting fear that can ambush even the best of people and lead them to disfigure themselves as images of their creator. People in need called Jesus forth as a Davidic shepherd leader. People who truly wanted to see called him forth as their “rabboni”. Jesus took on the titles of Son of God, Son of David, and “rabboni” as relational terms. As the Letter to the Hebrews says, Jesus did not assume those roles, he was called into them [Hebrews 5:1-6].

Jesus was called by God through the people who responded to him. As the Son, he learned to act in the name of the God whose love cannot be imposed. What it was like to be Jesus was to be hopeful,



difficult as well. The real freedom which Jesus offers this man and all of us is a picture of our face with His superimposed.

So how good is our vision? Are we using this wonderful gift of sight to its potential? Sure, we all see the image-filled screens on our iPhones, movies on Netflix or the words in a Reflection, but if you are like me, the something we are missing is Jesus. Jesus is present in all we encounter, from the moment we open our eyes in the morning, to closing them at night. For he is a “24-7-365” constant in our lives, whose presence we so often overlook.

As we go about our affairs today, we should all try and focus a little more closely on what we are really seeing and who is in our field of view. Maybe if we look a little closer at the entire picture, or try and peer around the corner, we will see Jesus standing there showing us his guiding hand, his unfailing willingness to be with us. And maybe, if we learn how to improve our focus, Jesus will no longer be at the edges or hidden in the shadows, but front and center in our field of view, and we will truly see “Christ in all things.”

Next Sunday, we here in North America we will put on masks and various costumes for celebrating the Eve of all Saints, or Halloween. The saints will take those masks off the next day and celebrate how they see themselves, because of their seeing themselves through the eyes of Jesus. The man threw off his costume of a cloak of blindness and walked the way of seeing himself close to Jesus.

—taken from the writings of Steve Scholer and Father Larry Gillick, S.J., which appear on the internet

**THE JESUS PRAYER:**

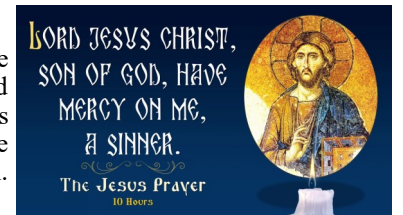
In our Scripture Readings for this 30<sup>th</sup> Week in Ordinary Time, the prophet Jeremiah has a beautiful vision of the end times when God will gather his people [Jeremiah 31:7-9]. In his vision, God gathers the weak and defenseless. This is so different from our world. The media focus on the strong, the young, the beautiful, and the rich. God' heart, however, is with the weak.

The author to the Letter to the Hebrews describes God entering our lives in weakness [Hebrews 5:1-6]. Once again this goes against our culture. We live in a world where people have become quick to judge and slow to forgive. Today, if a person makes a misstep, our society writes the person off — even if the misstep happened years ago

You and I are beset with weakness. We enter sacramental life for our own sins and the sins of the people. Thank goodness that Jesus calls those who are weak. We see it in Mark's Gospel — Jesus passes through Jericho [Mark 10:46-52]. In the Bible Jericho represents the fallen world. On the way out they encounter a blind beggar. He cries out: “Jesus, son of David, have pity on me.” For many people this has become a favorite prayer — the Jesus Prayer: “Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me a sinner.”

Once the blind man receives his sight, he begins to follow Jesus. What an example for us! We've become blind to God and to each other. Jesus can heal our sight.

—taken from the writings of Father Phil Bloom, which appear on the internet

**ALTAR SERVERS and LECTORS:**

We continue to be in need of servers and lectors. **Any student who is in the 3<sup>rd</sup> [and up] grade is invited to become an altar server; any student who is in the 5<sup>th</sup> [and up] grade is invited to become a lector.** These are both wonderful ministries — a great way to serve God and the faith community. If you would like to take advantage of these opportunities, **please give your name to Father John.** You do not have to attend Gilmour to be an altar server, lector, or to be involved in any other ministry at Our Lady Chapel. **Please call the chapel office [440-473-3560].**



**BELIEVING IS SEEING:**

The grandchildren suddenly realized their blind grandfather was missing. They finally found him planting trees in a nearby field. They were upset. The old gentleman calmly said: “But don’t you see how future generations will admire these trees?” The blind grandfather could see. His family — each with 20/20 vision — were blind. Miserable people are not those who are blind — rather miserable people are those who refuse to see.

Blindness in Christ's time was common. Hygiene was very primitive. Eye doctors had not yet arrived with their magic drops and wonderful lasers. However, what is interesting about this story is that the patient is given a proper name [Mark 10:46-52]. Mark was not in the habit of being so specific. So, Bartimaeus is a VIP waiting to happen. When Jesus was walking by, Bartimaeus gave Him a raucous yell. His eyes were dead but God had gifted him with a first class set of lungs. Onlookers tried to silence him, but Bartimaeus paid no heed. Then as now, people had no time or patience for the handicapped. Mark is telling us if you want to get something from the Teacher, you must keep after Him — you must even pester Him. You must not abandon your quest by saying: “God is too busy; He’s got the whole wide world in His hands!” The reality is that “You won’t get an answer at God’s door if you aren’t knocking.” Learn from Bartimaeus. You must know what you want. Generalities waste God’s time. For example: “Bring peace to the whole world” is a prayer with no answer.

Also, from this incident, we learn something important about the Teacher — though everyone else loses their cool with the blind man’s shouting, Jesus does not. Jesus had every reason to — He was attempting to teach the people about His mission. So, obviously, the lesson is clear — Jesus will not get annoyed with you if you make a nuisance of yourself with persistent prayer to Him.

Bartimaeus shouts: “Jesus, Son of David, have pity on me.” That was clearly a Messianic title. Like the grandfather in the beginning story, Bartimaeus, though blind, could see. His instincts were sharper than a fresh razor blade. The divinity of Jesus had come across to him in waves. But those about him, who enjoyed good vision, were blind to the Son of Man. The blind and deaf Helen Keller once said: “The most beautiful things in the world can’t be seen or even touched — they must be felt with the heart.”

Clever Bartimaeus saw Christ clearly with the eyes of his soul. So must you and I. Jesus uncustomarily did nothing to quiet the man as he blew His cover. Indeed, Bartimaeus becomes the first person of record from whom the Master accepted an acknowledgment of His Messiahship. This is the reason Mark names this important man. Jesus pauses in mid-syllable — this is a time for doing. He puts His own schedule on the back burner. He gives Bartimaeus center stage. More importantly, He gives him his sight. Many “talk the talk” but refuse to “walk the walk.” The Christ cannot be indicted for this crime; nor should we who are His followers. We too should belong to the “Just do it!” school. Incidentally, do you still feel Christ has no time for you?

Notice that Bartimaeus does not wear the Master down with small requests when He asks: “What do you want me to do for you?” — Bartimaeus goes for the whole nine yards: “Master, let me see again.” He gets his wish. Mark’s point is none too subtle. When you come to the Christ, do not bother Him with little incidental things — go for broke. Jesus obviously enjoys people who want the moon as well as the stars. He is one generous God. Should we forget it, we become the losers. John Newton sums up the case this way: “You are coming to a king; large petitions must you bring.”

This is the last healing miracle in Mark’s Gospel. In Bartimaeus, Mark presents a three-fold doctrine worth pondering. As William Barclay notes, the blind man begins with a need. Secondly he offers

**SEEING WHAT GOD SEES:**

One of the keys for understanding Mark’s gospel is that his Jesus only twice asks someone: “What do you want me to do for you?” — and the other time was just this past week when Jesus was asked by James and John to do them a favor. We saw that James and John's response to his question wasn't the one other Christs should make. Bartimaeus’ response is much more appropriate [Mark 10:46-52].

From the very beginning, Mark depicts the blind beggar as doing what individuals called by Jesus should do. First, he is persistent in demanding that Jesus “take pity” on him — even in the face of the crowd’s objections. Second, he immediately responds to Jesus’ call by throwing aside his cloak, springing up, and hastening to him. It is probably same to assume that his discarded cloak — probably his only possession — didn’t hit the ground. Someone else would have grabbed and kept it. Neither does he check his appointment calendar to determine what day and time he can meet with Jesus. Nothing stands in his way. At this point, Bartimaeus is Mark’s example of a perfect disciple.

This stands in stark contrast to the response of James and John. How does the perfect disciple respond to Jesus’ question: “What do you want me to do for you?” It’s a simple — “Master, I want to see.” True disciples don't ask for the glory seats, for high positions in the community, nor for an easy life — they just want to see what God and the risen Jesus want them to do.

Notice Jesus’ response to Bartimaeus. He doesn’t say: “I restore your sight.” Against expectations, he assures the blind beggar that it doesn’t take a miracle to receive the sight to know God’s will. Disciples of Jesus already possess what’s necessary to clearly see what God wants — “Go your way; your faith has saved you.” Those who accept Jesus’ value system as their own will know in what direction God expects them to go.

It’s no accident that Mark ends his three prediction/misunderstanding/clarification passages with the observation that Bartimaeus “followed behind him on the way.” Immediately following Jesus’ encounter with Bartimaeus, Jesus enters Jerusalem to begin the events of Palm Sunday. He has less than a week to live. This particular “way” leads to the suffering, death and resurrection which all Jesus’ followers are expected to experience.

Now Jesus’ command — “Get behind me, Satan!” — to the befuddled Peter back makes much more sense see Mark 8]. Unlike Bartimaeus, the perfect disciple, Peter isn’t content to follow behind Jesus; he stands in front of Jesus and tells him how he should “do it.” We only know how to imitate another by going behind him or her — not by standing in front of them. That’s how we learn to live the faith Jesus demands.

The unknown author of the Letter to the Hebrews couldn’t agree more. That seems to be why he emphasizes the historical Jesus becoming one with all of us. He doesn’t expect us to become God — he simply believes that we’re called to imitate the faith and actions of another human being. Just as the Jewish high priest was “taken from among humans,” so Jesus was also taken from among us. He did what any of us — with God’s help — is capable of doing [Hebrews 5:1-6]. But, as with Bartimaeus, it all revolves around seeing what Jesus sees.

Even Jeremiah — active 600 years before Jesus — understood that faith helps us perceive what others ignore. He’s able to see the Lord bringing 8<sup>th</sup> century BCE Israelite exiles back from Assyria, even though such a return hadn’t formally taken place [Jeremiah 31:7-9]. Such faith constantly perceives a caring God acting as a parent with God’s family — even when a majority of people never seem to notice such loving characteristics.

If we’re not seeing individuals and situations with different, loving eyes, we’re really not following close behind Jesus.

—taken from the writings of Father Roger Karban, which appear on the internet



fear that should not be confused with fear as we normally understand it.

What is “holy fear”? What kind of fear is healthy? What kind of fear triggers wisdom? Holy fear is love’s fear — namely, the kind of fear that is inspired by love. It’s a fear based upon reverence and respect for a person or a thing we love. When we genuinely love another person we will live inside of a healthy anxiety — a worry that our actions should never grossly disappoint, disrespect, or violate the other person. We live in holy fear when we are anxious not to betray a trust or disrespect someone. But this is very different from being afraid of somebody or being afraid of being punished.

Bad power and bad authority intimidate and make others afraid of them. God is never that kind of power or authority. God entered our world as a helpless infant, and God’s power still takes that same modality. Babies don’t intimidate — even as they inspire holy fear. We watch our words and our actions around babies not because they threaten us, but rather because their very helplessness and innocence inspire an anxiety in us that makes us want to be at our best around them.

The Gospels are meant to inspire that kind of fear. God is Love — a benevolent power, a gracious authority — not someone to be feared. Indeed God is the last person we need to fear. Jesus came to rid us of fear. Virtually every theophany in scripture — an instance where God appears — begins with the words: “Do not be afraid!” What frightens us does not come from God.

In the Jewish scriptures — the Old Testament — King David is revealed as the person who best grasped this. Among all the figures in the Old Testament — including Moses and the great prophets — David is depicted as the figure that best exemplified what it means to walk on this earth in the image and likeness of God — even though at a point he grossly abuses that trust. Despite his great sin, it is to David, not to Moses or the prophets, to whom Jesus attributes his lineage. David is the Christ-figure in the Old Testament. He walked in holy fear of God, and never in an unhealthy fear.

The Book of Samuel recounts a great example of this. It recounts an incident where David is, one day, returning from battle with his soldiers. His troops are hungry. The only available food is the bread in the temple. David asks for that and is told that it is only to be consumed by the priests in sacred ritual. He answers the priest to this effect: “I’m the King, placed here by God to act responsibly in his name. We don’t ordinarily ask for the temple bread, but this is an exception, a matter of urgency, the soldiers need food, and God would want us to responsibly do this” [see 1 Samuel 21]. And so David took the temple bread and gave it to his soldiers. In the Gospels, Jesus praises this action by David and asks us to imitate it [see Mark 2:25], telling us that we are not made for the Sabbath, but that the Sabbath is made for us.

David understood what is meant by that. He had discerned that God is not so much a law to be obeyed as a gracious presence under which we are asked to creatively live. He feared God — but as one fears someone in love, with a “holy fear,” not a blind, legalistic one.

A young mother once shared this story: Her six year-old had just started school. She had taught him to kneel by his bed each night before going to sleep and recite a number of night prayers. One night — shortly after starting school — he hopped into bed without first kneeling in prayer. Surprised by this, she challenged him with the words: “Don’t you pray anymore?” His reply: “No, I don’t. My teacher at school told us that we are not supposed to pray. She said that we’re supposed to talk to God — and tonight I’m tired and have nothing to say!”

Like King David, he too had discerned what it really means to be God’s child, and how God is not so much a law to be obeyed as a gracious presence who desires a mutually loving relationship, one of holy fear.

—taken from the writings of Father Ronald Rolheiser, O.M.I., which appear on the internet



a heartfelt thank you to his Healer. Finally “the man followed Jesus along the road.” This is what Christian discipleship is all about — need, gratitude, and enlistment. We would all do well to take a page out of Bartimaeus’ “modus operandi”. Let us not be among the many who, though not blind, still refuse to see. Note well the cured man drives a heart through the tired old line that teaches “seeing is believing”. For him believing is seeing.

—taken from the writings of Father James Gilhooley, which appear on the internet.

### BLINDNESS OF SPIRIT:

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: “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 [Mark 10:49-52].

When I moved to Tucson a few years ago, one of the realities I had to adjust to was the large number of homeless people found in nearly every part of the city. The weather — especially the minimal rainfall and mild winters — make this a natural landing place for those who might not easily find a home in other parts of the country. As much as I hate to admit it, I still sometimes find myself feeling embarrassed or disconcerted by the extended hands or incoherent mumbling. This is a challenging reality, especially when I remember that as Christians — and particular in my vocation as a religious brother — we’re called to be people of encounter.

With all this in mind, it’s easy to understand the discomfort that Jesus’ followers seemed to have felt in Mark’s Gospel. After all, the blind man, Bartimaeus, was causing a spectacle, shouting at Jesus. But even after the people in the crowd told him to be quiet, he kept calling out “all the more, ‘Son of David, have pity on me.’”

To really get a sense of the importance of this story — which is much more than just another account of one of Jesus’ miracles — we have to think about where it falls in the Gospel of Mark. The healing of the blind Bartimaeus is, in fact, linked to the healing of another blind man, recounted only a few chapters earlier (8:22-26). These two stories form “bookends” for one of the most important sections of Mark’s Gospel in which Jesus tries to help his followers understand who he is and what his mission really is. But, as we’ve discovered over the past several Sundays, the Apostles and the other disciples don’t seem to be able to comprehend Jesus’ message or to understand the true cost and meaning of discipleship. After all, these are the same men who openly opposed him when Jesus tried to teach them about his coming suffering and death.

But then, on this 30<sup>th</sup> Week in Ordinary Time, we are given the story of this blind beggar who seems to be able to see what the Apostles cannot. In fact, the physical healing of Bartimaeus is a powerful reminder that, when we open ourselves to God’s grace, we can be healed of that blindness of spirit that sometimes prevents us from following Jesus with freedom and joy, which is an important part of discipleship.

Saint Mark beautifully describes Bartimaeus’ excitement when Jesus finally calls for him — “He threw aside his cloak, sprang up, and came to Jesus.” There is an energy in his response that wonderfully exemplifies the enthusiasm that should be a hallmark of our discipleship. When the Lord calls, we must be ready to respond. And because of his faith and willingness to act, Jesus rewards the blind man by not only restoring his physical sight but by empowering him to live out his faith in the community of disciples. Pope Benedict XVI reflected on this when he remarked: “Bartimaeus represents one aware of his pain and crying out to the Lord, confident of being healed. In the encounter with Christ, lived with faith, Bartimaeus regains the light he had lost, and with it the fullness of his dignity: he gets back onto his feet and resumes the journey, which from that moment has a guide, Jesus, and a path, the same that Jesus is travelling. The evangelist tells us nothing more about Bartimaeus, but in him he shows us what discipleship is: following Jesus “along the way,” in the light of faith.”

Thus, we too are invited to humbly reflect on the ways we might be spiritually blind by asking ourselves what habits, attitudes, and ideologies hold us back from becoming the disciples that Jesus is calling us to be.

—taken from the writings of Brother Silas Henderson, S.D.S., which appear on the internet



**LIVING A SECOND TIME AROUND:**

What if you could live your life over? What if you had a second chance to live life again? What would you change? What you keep the same? Or to put it terms of Mark's gospel, what would you want to see differently? [Mark 10:46-52].

The cry of Bartimaeus in Mark's gospel is: "Lord, I want to see." If that cry were to become true for you, what would you want to see? Father William Bausch in a beautiful essay on the Bartimaeus story suggests that there are three things we would want to see differently: [1] relationships; [2] the overlooked; and [3] the hints of God's grace in our lives.

The first thing Fr. Bausch says we would want to see differently is what our heart has always told us is true — that relationships are the most important part of life. This would lead us to ask ourselves why we allowed the madness of individualism and consumerism to get ahead of our relationships? Why did we allow our careers and our schedules, our entertainment and our desire to accumulate things push the people in our lives to the side? When we look at our lives, all too often our most important relationships—the relationships between husband and wife, children and parents, and friends—are not as treasured as we know they should be. We don't eat together, we don't take time for the people we love. Yet, in our most sober moment we know that nothing is more important than our relationships. Then why don't we see it?

In 1917 during the Russian Revolution, thousands of unsuspecting and bewildered subjects were randomly gathered together and executed with a bullet in the back of their heads. An eyewitness of those executions said that when it became clear to the victims that they were going to die, most of them made the same request. They wanted to say goodbye. And because no one else was available, many of them ended up saying goodbye and kissing their own executioners. Isn't that a sad story? But does it not emphasize that in the end relationships are what count? When we face a bullet in the back of our head, what we want to do is remember and honor our connectedness to each other. If it so clear then, why is it not clearer now? Why don't we see it? I would imagine that if we given a second time around, we would pray to see more clearly the primacy of relationships in our lives

The second thing that Fr. Bausch says we should ask to see is the overlooked. You know who the overlooked are — the poor, the needy, the troubled, the non-persons who suffer because they have value in the eyes of so few. The overlooked are the people who tried to love us and we did not love in return, the people who cried out to us and we did not hear, and every person we did not treat with the value that they deserved.

Those are the overlooked, and we should remember to include ourselves in their number. Because everyone of us here has some part of our lives that we have overlooked. There is some flaw that we were not willing to face, some fear that we will not deal with. Not dealing with those parts of ourselves is disastrous. There are many twelve-step programs that are available in our society that help people recover from alcoholism, drugs, gambling, and sexual addiction. Yet what all of those programs share in common is the first step. The first step is to recovery is to recognize that there is a problem. You cannot move towards health unless you admit that something is wrong. None of us can become the person that God wants us to be unless we are willing to admit that there are flaws and faults in our life that we have overlooked. Therefore, if we had a second time around, would we not pray to see the people we have overlooked and the flaws in our own life that we were unwilling to face?

The third and final thing we would be called to see is the presence of God in our lives, the hints of God's presence that surround us. God is always present in our lives, living in every moment and every



anyone else — in fact, he has more to answer to than most people because he has daily contact with the mysteries of God. Still, there are many people and many priests who think that priests should not be seen as normal human beings. That is really sad. It misses the whole point of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. He came to offer atonement for the sins of all the people — including, and perhaps especially, his priests. Perhaps if people had a more realistic view of who their priests are — and if priests promoted a more realistic view of whom they are — there would be less scandal when the human weakness of the clergy becomes evident.

I'm sure some of you are wondering what all this has to do with you. Why did I decide to devote this reflection to some of the theological tenets of the Sacrament of Holy Orders? It is because I don't want you to confuse the actions of the priest with the person performing these actions. So, in summary, the priest's main role is to renew the Eternal Offering of Christ for himself and his people. He must recognize that he was called by God to serve the people. He didn't earn the priesthood, nor did he have a right to this vocation. And finally priest and people should realize that God's power is made perfect in the weakness we all have — including the weakness of His priests.

So I ask you today to pray for your priests. Pray that we might truly be priests of God serving His People.

—taken from the writings of Monsignor Joseph Pellegrino which appear on the internet

**READINGS FOR THE WEEK:**

|                   |                                 |
|-------------------|---------------------------------|
| <b>Monday:</b>    | Romans 8:12-17, Luke 13:10-17   |
| <b>Tuesday:</b>   | Romans 8:18-25, Luke 13:18-21   |
| <b>Wednesday:</b> | Romans 8:26-30, Luke 13:22-30   |
| <b>Thursday:</b>  | Ephesians 2:19-22, Luke 6:12-16 |
| <b>Friday:</b>    | Romans 9:1-5, Luke 14:1-6       |
| <b>Saturday:</b>  | Romans 11:1-29, Luke 14:1-11    |

**31<sup>st</sup> Week in Ordinary Time:** Deuteronomy 6:2-6, Hebrews 7:23-28, Mark 12:28-34

**GREAT AND SMALL:**

Be faithful in small things because it is in them that your strength lies. Nothing is small for our good God, for he is great and we are small. That is why he lowers himself and cares to do small things, in order to offer us an opportunity to show him our love. Since he does them, they are great things, they are infinite. Nothing he does can be small. Again: practice fidelity even in the least things, not for their own sake, but for the sake of what is great — that is, the will of God.

— Mother Teresa

**HOLY AND UNHOLY FEAR:**

Not all fear is created equal — at least not religiously. There's a fear that is healthy and good — a sign of maturity and love. And there's also a fear that is bad — that blocks maturity and love. But this needs explanation. There's a lot of misunderstanding about fear inside of religious circles — especially around the Scriptural passage that says that the fear of God is the beginning of wisdom [Psalm 111:10]. Too often texts like these — as well as religion in general — have been used to instill an unhealthy fear inside of people in the name of God. We need to live in "holy fear", but holy fear is a very particular kind of



### A PRACTICAL GUIDE TO UNDERSTANDING THE PRIESTHOOD:

This weekend is “Priesthood Sunday” in the Church, and so I would like to concentrate on the Letter to the Hebrews [5:1-6] — which I would call the Practical Guide to Understanding the Priesthood. This letter is written later than most of the other Books of the Bible. It is a lengthy sermon written to shore up the faith of second and third generation Christians of Hebrew ancestry. When the writer begins by mentioning High Priests, he is speaking about two groups of people — both the Temple priests of the Old Covenant, and the Christian bishops and priests of the New Covenant. The author reminds us that every high priest is taken from among men and made their representative before God to offer gifts and sacrifices for sin.

Before Christianity, this sacrifice would be some sort of animal. The sacrifice was made to atone for sin. Jewish theology quotes Leviticus 17:11 that says that blood makes an atonement for the soul. The Jewish feast of Yom Kippur — celebrated last month on September 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup>, is the Day of Atonement, when sacrifice is made for sin. This is not just an acknowledgment of sin. That would be no more effective than an apology would be effective in removing a murder charge. God has been offended by the sins of humankind. Only a sacrifice can atone for the offence. Leviticus gives these instructions — the high priest, after becoming ritually pure, first offered a bull for his sins and the sins of his household. Then two goats were set aside. Lots were cast, and one goat was chosen to be the scapegoat, or “Azazel.” The High Priest slaughtered the other goat to atone for the sins of Israel and brought the blood into the Holy of Holies. The scapegoat was sent away to be lost in the desert after the High Priest laid both hands on its head and confessed the sins of Israel. In this way, the sins of the nation were symbolically carried off into the desert [see Leviticus 16].

The Lamb of God, Jesus Christ, is the perfect sacrifice. He is sacrificed once in history. This sacrifice is renewed mystically at Mass. This one sacrifice is for all people. Jesus Christ is both priest and sacrifice. The essential action of the Mass is the offering of the Son to the Father. The Mass takes us to the Cross and leads us mystically into the Eternal “Now of God” — as the priest offers the sacrifice of the Son to the Father.

We need the priests of the New Covenant to replace the priests of the Old Covenant. The Temple no longer exists — nor is it needed. In the New Covenant, we need priests to offer the sacrifice of Christ for the people and for himself.

The author of the Book of Hebrews refers to priests of the New Covenant when it says that a priest is able to deal patiently with the ignorant and the erring because he himself is beset by weakness. It goes on to say that for this reason, the priest must make sin offerings for himself as well as for the people. The priest of the New Covenant realizes that he himself is attacked by weakness and sin in his own life. When I celebrate Mass, I make the eternal offering not just for the sins of the people but for my own sins. Sometimes people will be concerned that if they make an honest confession, the priest is going to think negatively about them. The truth is that I think far more highly about you than I do about myself — after all, you are the one humbling yourself before God. I'm just the mediator. I also need forgiveness, and I need the Eternal Offering for sin that is the essence of the Mass.

Finally, Hebrews says that no one takes this honor upon himself — but only when called by God, can the priest function as priest. No one has the right to be ordained. Priesthood is not a job. It does not demand an equal employment opportunity. Priesthood is a vocation — a call from God. Why God chooses this person instead of that person to be a priest is beyond me. Why He chose me still baffles me — perhaps it's to show that He has a good sense of humor. Certainly it is to show that His power is made perfect in the weakness of His priests — in my weakness.

In the old days, priests were often placed on pedestals. How horrible. A priest is not better than



breath. The beauty of God pulses through our daily routine. Yet how infrequently do we see that presence and take comfort and strength from it? How much deeper, how much more rewarding our life would be if we could have increased sensitivity to the ways in which God is present in our lives? I would like to share with you the words of an anonymous author who shows this kind of sensitivity to the beauty of God in daily routine:

- I can say nothing of God except I saw the red flames of a cardinal against the snow this morning as I drank my coffee.
- I can say nothing of God except the warm smell of potato soup and the sharp tang of cheddar cheese that shimmied up my nose when a friend of mine made lunch for me.
- I can say nothing of God except this afternoon I washed my face in a cold stream and it left me feeling fresh and clean.
- I can say nothing of God except that two nights ago a cricket sang a funny song in closet amid the socks and the silence.
- I can say nothing of God except stones can speak and deer can fly in my dreams, that a child smiled at me today at the supermarket, that each blade of grass wears a locket with God's face inside, that on every hair on my cat's face is written 'Alleluia.'
- I can say nothing of God except that the texture of bread on my tongue and the sweet liquid acid of grape in my throat are a bittersweet memory of compassion and a taste of heaven.

God is around us, at every moment. There are hints of God's beauty in every circumstance. Would we not pray for greater sensitivity to those hints of grace if we could live our lives over?

The cry of Bartimaeus in today's Gospel is: “Lord, I want to see”. It is the cry of every disciple — the cry of every person who wishes to be fully human. I would suggest to you that you make it your cry today. I would ask that in your own voice you cry out that plea for sight. And if Christ were to ask you what do you want to see, answer: I want to see the primacy of relationships in my life. I want to see the people I overlooked and the flaws in my own life I cannot face. I want to see the hints of your presence in my daily routine. If you make that request, do not be surprised if Christ will hear you. Do not be surprised if Jesus grants your prayer. For that is the good news. The promise of the gospel is that the second time around can begin today. —taken from the writings of Father George Smiga, which appear on the internet

### GRATITUDE:

A spirituality of our later years will be a spirituality of gratitude. Gratitude remains the foundation and source of our spiritual lives. The second half of life is an especially good time to grow in awareness of the gift of life itself, of health, friends, vocation and ministry. It is a time to remember and savor all the other gifts we have received — gifts that have sustained us on the road we have taken in life. As we look back on our lives, we recognize the many times when we have taken things for granted, and claimed things as our own that were clearly gifts. Our lack of gratitude may have led us to lose touch with the Giver of all gifts.

Our later years are a time to acknowledge and cherish the gifts that have been given to us, and the wonder that God has worked in and through us during our lives. It is a great temptation to devalue what we have done in life, to compare our achievements with those of others whom we admire or with the great dreams of our youth. We begin to ask questions. What difference have I made? What have I done of lasting value? How have I responded to the graces given to me? We may fail to celebrate and treasure the everyday, but extraordinary moments of friendship, ministry and prayer.

The second half of life calls us to true humility, and to the recognition of our gifts as gifts from the hands of a loving God.

—Father Gerald Fagin, S.J.



**ARISE AND SHINE:**

Pity is a word we don't enjoy hearing, and it's definitely not something we seek. We say phrases like: "Don't pity me!" or "Don't look down on me!" when we feel ashamed or self-conscious. We have "pity parties" when life just isn't going our way. Simply put: Pity is often characterized as a shameful, ugly thing.

For a man like Bartimaeus [Mark 10:46-52], pity was something he was used to. He was no stranger to begging like a homeless man on the streets of Jericho. And it is likely many passed him by with disgust for all that he didn't have. Yet, even though Bartimaeus' vision was gone, he still had his sense of smell, hearing, and touch. He may not have been able to read the Torah, but most likely memorized it as he heard it proclaimed, sitting outside the walls of the synagogue. He heard the stories of Jesus with a keen ear. So, when the dust covered his face from the crowd kicking up dirt on the road, and the smell of sweat and adrenaline began to become recognizable, Bartimaeus must've known Jesus was approaching. So he cried out with a confident voice: "Jesus, son of David, have pity on me."

But, Bartimaeus wasn't yelling at Christ to pity him the way we might pity a destitute man or woman on the side of a freeway exit. No, he was looking for something radically different — he was pleading for Christ's compassion and mercy from a lifetime of suffering and blindness. He was begging for Christ to stop and look at him, for Jesus to notice him and heal him!

This is exactly the cry the Lord wants to hear from us: "Have mercy on me, a sinner!" Only then can our Father in Heaven ask us: "What do you want me to do for you?"

For Bartimaeus, he wanted to see. Can you imagine opening your eyes for the first time and gazing into the eyes of Christ's, full of deep love? This love spoke to the depths of Bartimaeus' soul and must have overwhelmed him beyond words. Those are the same eyes that want to stare deeply into yours. To know what you want from Him — not as you would want the superficial things of this world, but rather, what you want from the depths of your soul. He is asking: "At your very core, what do you want me to do for you?"

Pope Francis wrote in *Misericordiae Vultus*: "Human beings, whenever they judge, look no farther than the surface, whereas the Father looks into the very depths of the soul." Jesus wants to put a balm of mercy on the sufferings you experience. On the cross, He showed the deep compassion and understanding that not only does He know the suffering you experience, but He also died so that you might not suffer in vain. He longs to heal you. He is ready to reach out to you with compassion and mercy but needs you to come to Him, to call out to Him.

Do not grow weary in asking our Father for what you need. What do you want Christ to do for you? He's waiting for you to call out to Him. —written by Tricia Tembreull, a college campus minister

**LIFE TEEN and EDGE:**

**Our Life Teen and EDGE youth group is meeting in-person again. We will meet for an hour beginning at 11:30 AM following our 10 AM Sunday Mass in the Lennon Board**

**Room.** If you are unable to join us, there are many resources available for you on the Life Teen website — [lifeteen.com](http://lifeteen.com). There are numerous blogs and videos for you to connect with. The Life Teen national office continues to release many new programs. **Please contact Father John for more information. And please join us each Sunday for our Mass at 10 AM — in person or live-streamed, and then come to our Life Teen/EDGE gathering after Mass.** And above all, let us continue to join each other in prayer. **Father**

**John is available for you. Please contact him [cell: 216-570-9276].**

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**THE BLINDNESS THAT CRIPPLES:**

Mark invites us to reflect on the story of a blind man with great faith by the name of Bartimaeus [Mark 10:46-52]. He is sitting by the roadside with his cloak spread out to receive alms — the only way he had to support himself. Hearing that Jesus is passing by he cries out: "Jesus, son of David, have pity on me" — indicating that he already believes that Jesus is the long awaited Messiah who has the power to cure him. Some people in the crowd try to shut him up, but he persists, eventually getting the attention of Jesus, who calls him over and asks what he wants. The blind man says: "Master I want to see." Jesus responds: "Go your way, your faith has saved you." Immediately Bartimaeus is able to see and becomes a follower of Jesus.

Mark and the other three evangelists presented the miracles of Jesus as signs that the reign of God was at hand and that the healing power of grace was at work in the world. For us today, the miracle story reminds us that the risen Christ has the power to cure our blindness — whatever form it takes.

To access Christ's healing power, we need to recognize our own particular blind spots. Some possibilities — an intellectual blindness that limits our ability to see important truths about life; an emotional blindness that clouds our perceptions of the deep feelings that influence our daily moods; a moral blindness that prevents us from recognizing ethical obligations and Gospel ideals; and a spiritual blindness that dulls our discernment of God's grace at work in our lives. Following the example of Bartimaeus, we need to seek the Lord's help in dealing with the specific blind spots that are retarding our spiritual growth.

We can imagine some examples of individuals seeing the light with Christ's help. A well-educated cradle Catholic who recognized that he was functioning with a grade school understanding of his faith, attended lectures on Catholicism sponsored by his parish. A busy mother of three, surprised to realize she no longer feels comfortable in adult settings, joined a book club which involved her in serious discussions with other women. A factory worker who recognized that he automatically tuned out Pope Francis on climate change became more open when he read his encyclical on the environment. A school teacher, pondering the example of Bartimaeus, identified a spiritual blind spot that kept her from seeing Christ in a couple of her work colleagues, prompting her to be more attentive to their good qualities.

What are your most troublesome blind spots and how could you be more open to Christ's healing power —taken from the writings of Father Jim Bacik which appear on the internet

**GOD CAN IMAGINE:**

So much of our energy, time, and money goes into maintaining distance from one another. Many if not most of the resources of the world are used to defend ourselves against one another, to maintain or increase our power, and to safeguard our own privileged position. Imagine all that effort being put in the service of peace and reconciliation! Would there be any poverty? Would there be crimes and wars? Just imagine that there was no longer fear among people, no longer rivalry, hostility, bitterness, or revenge. We say: "I can't imagine." But God says: "That's what I imagine, a whole world not only created but also living in my image." — Henri J. M. Nouwen

**RUN THE RACE:**

"O my God, teach me to be generous, to serve you as you deserve to be served, to give without counting the cost, to fight without fear of being wounded, to work without seeking rest, and to spend myself without expecting any reward, but the knowledge that I am doing your holy will. Amen."

—St. Ignatius of Loyola

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