

‘HUMBLE SERVANTS LEARNING FROM JESUS TO SEE & UNDERSTAND MORE CLEARLY’

28 October 2018 - 30th Sunday Ordinary Time

A DEDICATED SECTION IN THE GOSPEL OF MARK

There is a dedicated section between Mark 8:22-27 and 10:46-52 that invites us to ponder how we see our lives as disciples.

DO WE SEE JESUS VAGUELY, DIMLY, PARTIALLY OR CLEARLY IN OUR FAITH?

DO WE UNDERSTAND JESUS VAGUELY, DIMLY, PARTIALLY OR CLEARLY IN OUR FAITH?

In Mark 8:21 Jesus says, ***‘Do you not yet understand?’***

Then we are meant to compare the two healing events of Mark 8:22-27 and 10:46-52. Before the second healing in Chapter 10 we hear

***‘whoever wishes to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you must be slave of all. For the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many.’***

To see Jesus more clearly, we need to see and live and love as humble servants, and to follow Jesus who shows us how to serve and live and love.

To understand Jesus more clearly, we need to understand and live and love as humble servants, and to follow Jesus who shows us how to understand and live and love.

Let us read from the healing account of the blind man at Bethsaida in Chapter 8.

THE HEALING ACCOUNT OF THE BLIND MAN IN MARK 8:22-27

*They came to Bethsaida. Some people brought a blind man to him and begged him to touch him.*

*He took the blind man by the hand and led him out of the village; and when he had put saliva on his eyes and laid his hands on him, he asked him,*

***‘Can you see anything?’***

*And the man looked up and said, ‘I can see people, but they look like trees, walking.’ Then Jesus laid his hands on his eyes again; and he looked intently and his sight was restored, and he saw everything clearly.*

*Then he sent him away to his home, saying,*

***‘Do not even go into the village.’***

We note that healing and understanding can be in stages. We can sometimes think that we see and understand clearly, though we are seeing trees walking instead. We pray for the day when God graces us to see clearly.

Not long after this healing, Jesus is on his way and says to his disciples

**'Who do people say that I am?'**

IN OUR FAITH, DO WE SEE PEOPLE DIMLY AS WALKING TREES?

If we see dimly, then our response to Jesus can be dim as well.

In contrast to the healing of the man in Chapter 8, we now come to today's Gospel.

THE HEALING ACCOUNT OF THE BLIND MAN IN [MARK 10:46-52](#)

*'They came to Jericho. As he and his disciples and a large crowd were leaving Jericho, Bartimaeus son of Timaeus, a blind beggar, was sitting by the roadside.*

*When he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to shout out and say,*

*'Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!'*

*Many sternly ordered him to be quiet, but he cried out even more loudly,*

*'Son of David, have mercy on me!'*

*Jesus stood still and said,*

**'Call him here.'**

*And they called the blind man, saying to him, 'Take heart; get up, he is calling you.'*

*So throwing off his cloak, he sprang up and came to Jesus.*

*Then Jesus said to him,*

**'What do you want me to do for you?'**

*The blind man said to him, 'My teacher, let me see again.'*

*Jesus said to him,*

**'Go; your faith has made you well.'**

*Immediately he regained his sight and followed him on the way.'*

We note in this Gospel passage that Bartimaeus regains his sight and follows Jesus. Following Jesus will involve the ascending the steep road towards Jerusalem.

There are many examples we could each take today from the Gospel parallel.

Let us pause and identify which examples we would like to place before God this week in prayer.

Perhaps from our relationships, our work place, our neighbours, our church community, our world.

[PAUSE]

**FIRST EXAMPLE: SITTING WITH GOD AND PRAYING FOR SOMEONE WHO DIED.**

Let us reflect on one example, with the month of November in mind.

This Thursday, November 1<sup>st</sup> is All Saints Day

and Friday, November 2<sup>nd</sup> is All Souls Day.

In November we traditionally remember those who have died.

On this Friday are Masses at 9am and 7pm.

And we place their names in the Book of Remembrance near the Pascal Candle.

We might like to make some uninterrupted time available this week at home or elsewhere. Maybe 15 or 20 minutes or longer.

Just being before God, relaxing and placing someone before us who has died some time ago. Perhaps a family member, a friend, someone who had a major influence on us.

We pray to God that we may understand that person and ourselves more clearly.

We might begin by picturing that person in our mind for a few seconds, and then thinking of the closest people to that person. And praying for each of them.

We might ask ourselves who would that person would appreciate that I pray for. Perhaps their children or partners or people who have carried on their work or interests. Praying for people with a similar passion. And as people come to mind, we pray for them.

And we trust God in wherever God leads us in this prayer. We might be led to say sorry for something we never apologized for in the last days or weeks for that person's life. Or to thank them for something we never thanked them for. Or maybe through the grace of God, to be just present before them.

We could be tempted to consciously control this process. More an exercise.

But it is different when **we allow God to take us wherever God invites us. To surrender our need to control, and let God take over.** God's prompting us could surprise us. Trusting God, that we may see more clearly, through the grace of God.

Let us take another example

#### **SECOND EXAMPLE: CHARITY AND EDUCATION**

Remembering Mark Chapter 8 and the initial healing of the man near Bethsaida and being able to see people like trees walking, let us count the trees of the Church's mission in charity and education around the world. We can list them dimly, as of the end of 2016 as

#### **Charity and healthcare centres run in the world by the Church include:**

5.287 hospitals

15.937 dispensaries,

610 Care Homes for people with Leprosy, mainly in Asia (352) and Africa (192);

15.722 Homes for the elderly, or the chronically ill or people with a disability,

9.552 orphanages,

11.758 creches,

13.897 marriage counselling centres,

3.506 social rehabilitation centres and

35.746 other kinds of institutions.

### **Catholic schools and Education**

In the field of education, the Catholic Church runs  
72.826 kindergartens with 7.313.370 pupils;  
96.573 primary schools with 35.125.124 pupils;  
47.862 secondary schools with 19.956.347 pupils.  
The Church also cares for 2.509.457 high school pupils,  
and 3.049.548 university students.

[Source “**Church’s Book of Statistics**” published (stats as of 31 December 2016).  
[Summaries were made available on World Mission Sunday 21/10/18 by Fides News Service](#)]

Listing them, as a statistic, is only seeing dimly and understanding dimly.  
We could be tempted to brag and miss the point of the Gospel.  
Each has a story. Each has people in need.  
Each has issues of resources and compliance and funding and human stories  
and history and future considerations and the lives of people here and now.

When we touch the lives of people humbly as servants,  
we begin to see and understand more clearly.

We reflect on these ministries from the context of both Gospel passages,  
and the movement symbolized from Bethsaida to Jericho and on to Jerusalem.

(We pause and read them slowly.  
And we take them to God in prayer.  
After a short while, we ask what is God saying to you and to me.)

### **DEPENDING OF JESUS**

Both Gospel passages speak to us in a variety of circumstances in our lives.  
May we become humble servants of God and each other.  
With Jesus showing us the way forward.  
Depending on Jesus for clearer visions and understandings.

Let us humbly thank God.  
Let us pray.

Fr. Gerry

[Readings: <http://www.usccb.org/bible/readings/102818.cfm>]  
[Parish Facebook: <http://bit.ly/parishFacebook28102018>]



“YOUR FAITH HAS  
SAVED YOU”

MARK 10:46-52