

Monday week 33 of Ordinary Time

Apocalypse 1:1-4,2:1-5, Gospel: Luke 18:35-43

One of the Old Testament prophecies of what the Messiah would be like, was that He would give sight to the blind (Isaiah 61:1) and so when Jesus healed the physically blind it was a sign of who He is, the promised Messiah, the one who would set Israel free. “Setting Israel free” was expected to be a political freedom, but we know that the true freedom is freedom from the slavery of sin. We all fall back into old habits and although we have been set free from original sin in our Baptism, we still succumb to temptation and pick up old habits. Today’s readings give us hope in this cycle.

The term “visually impaired” which tends to be used these days, covers the whole range of conditions from those who have no sense of light at all, to those who have “very poor eyesight.” Likewise, with our spiritual understanding. The blind man, although He was not able to see with his eyes, had a greater insight than those whose eyes functioned well enough to move about unaided. He recognised that Jesus is the Son of David (one of the titles of the promised Messiah). Unable to physically see, he sees with the eyes of his spirit. The blind man calls out to Jesus because he wants to physically see again. He has obviously suffered some injury or illness which has led him to lose his physical sight, and not unsurprisingly wishes to be healed of this blindness. Without his physical sight, he cannot work and is therefore reliant upon the good will of others in order not to starve.

In the first reading the seer, John, is tasked with telling the church in Ephesus that they love less than they used to. Our spiritual lives all wax and wane; sometimes we “feel” closer to the Lord by His grace, and at other times we are quite distant. The blind man in the Gospel knew that he needed to make a change in his life, because he did not want to be reliant on other people all the time. We can be blind spiritually and not know it. We can be blind to all the graces that the Father wants to give us and blind to others’ need of our love. Let us repent of the times when we have fallen away from practice of the faith, or from a regular prayer life, and like the blind man, let us cry out to Jesus, “Son of David, let me see again, let me love again, let me desire you again.” The Holy Spirit will not fail to ignore these prayers made from the heart, just as God the Son did not fail to heal the blind man. Our faith will save us.

(Carol Ann Harnett)