

**Christmas is not too far away**

**And we have a special question echoing in our Gospel today**

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

**The same question Jesus asked James and John last week**

**The same thing he asked Bartimaeus**

**He is asking each of us**

***What is it you want me to do for you?***

**Do we want power and glory?**

**Do we want to see?**

**We see that even the close followers of Jesus can get it all wrong**

**And those on the edges can get it right**

**What would I ask for?**

**Something to take home today**

**Do I realize he is asking me the same thing?**

**The Israelite people knew what they wanted**

**They were in exile**

**Conquered by the Babylonians**

**They were taken from their homes**

**Serving as slaves**

**But they had received a promise that God would lead them home**

***The blind and the lame I will bring back***

***I will console them***

**Years and years go by**

**They remain in captivity**

**But they still call out**

**They still have faith**

**In our reading from Jeremiah**

**We see they have been brought home**

**This is a foretaste of salvation as well**

**Salvation is a promised event in the future**

**But it is also taking place right now**

**Like the Israelites, we are called to praise God for this**

**Even if we cannot see it clearly in the moment**

**In faith we believe it**

**And we shout with praise to God for this gift**

**While we wait for its fulfillment**

**Bartimaeus is mirroring this promise to the nation to Israel in himself**

**Unlike the rich young man**

**The widow of Nain or the woman hemorrhaging for 12 years**

**We are told this man's name**

**Bartimaeus; the son of Timaeus**

**We don't know how long he has been blind or what caused his  
blindness**

**We do know he was from Jericho**

**The first city to fall when the Israelite nation came into the  
Promised Land**

**Jericho stands for a cultural blindness**

**A blindness of secularism**

**Bartimaeus is a reflection of this greater blindness**

**But he has the grace to recognize something the others cannot**

**Son of David, have mercy on my**

**The same thing we say at the beginning of each Mass**

***Kyrie eleison; Christi eleison; Kyrie eleison***

***Lord, have mercy***

**A call from deep within our own helplessness**

**He is told to be silent**

**How often does the world say the same thing to the Church?**

**You can't tell me what to do**

**Keep your advice to yourself**

**We don't need help forming our conscience**

**I will do as I please**

**I will vote as I please**

**I will live as I please**

**This is the spiritual blindness of secularism screaming at us to be quiet**

**Bartimaeus sees through this**

**Although he is physically blind**

**His perception is in clear focus**

***Son of David***

***Have pity on me***

**Now Jesus hears him**

**He tells those surrounding him**

***Call him***

**He is summoned**

**Again, reflected in the Mass**

**In the Eucharistic Prayer**

***Listen graciously to the prayers of this family***

***Whom you have summoned before you***

**The Church is an assembly of people summoned before God**

**Bartimaeus shows us what we should do**

**He gets up**

**Throws off his cloak**

**His only protection**

**Representing his old life**

**Everything he holds dear**

**And he flings it away**

**He is blind**

**It doesn't concern him it might be gone forever**

**He approaches Jesus**

**And Jesus asks a strange question:**

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

**Jesus desires a personal relationship with Bartimaeus**

**The same relationship he seeks with each of us**

**Bartimaeus makes no demands to be healed**

***Master, I want to see***

**This simple desire of his heart**

**Spoken to the heart of the One he had faith could provide**

**He asks for sight**

**He receives salvation**

**Bartimaeus has entered into a conversion of heart**

**This conversion brought about his physical healing of his sight**

**But more importantly**

**It brought about a spiritual healing**

**He was able to see with more than his eyes**

**The eyes of his spirit and soul are opened**

***Go on your way***

***Your faith has saved you***

***Immediately he received his sight***

*And followed him on the way*

Leaving everything behind

Bartimaeus becomes a disciple, following Christ on the way

We are like Bartimaeus

Spiritually blinded by sin

We pray and pray for this or that

Why can we not be healed as Bartimaeus was?

These last weeks we have seen how powerless we are

The rich young man not being able to follow

The camel passing through the eye of the needle

The demands and high standards of marriage

We are as powerless as a blind man on the side of the road

As powerless as the Jews in exile

In faith, we are summoned at the Mass

We call out Kyrie, eleison

Bartimaeus did not earn his healing

He did not earn his faith

It was not a reward for his prayers or novenas or good works

We come before Christ in our weakness and powerlessness

Trusting that miracles happen

We also trust that if we do not receive a miracle

**We will be healed**

**If not at this moment, at the moment God means for it to happen**

**And sometimes it seems our prayers go unanswered**

**We only see the extraordinary grace after we pass through a  
difficult time**

**Following the prayer of Christ**

***Father, if it is possible***

***Let this cup pass***

***But not my will, but yours be done***

**God's grace can flow through the darkest moments of life**

**Nothing is impossible for God**

**That is the promise of the Mass**

**Whether it is an immediate healing**

**A healing that comes with time**

**Or a total transformation of the worst into a blessing**

**We are invited to take heart**

**He is calling you**

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