

30th Sunday of the Year B

"Rabbuni, let me see again." (Mk 10:51)

First Reading

Jeremiah 31:7-9

The Lord says this: Shout with joy for Jacob! Hail the chief of nations! Proclaim! Praise! Shout: "The Lord has saved his people, the remnant of Israel!" See, I will bring them back from the land of the North and gather them from the far ends of earth; all of them: the blind and the lame, women with child, women in labour: a great company returning here. They had left in tears, I will comfort them as I lead them back; I will guide them to streams of water, by a smooth path where they will not stumble. For I am a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my first-born son.

Second Reading

Hebrews 5:1-6

Every high priest has been taken out of mankind and is appointed to act for men in their relations with God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins; and so he can sympathise with those who are ignorant or uncertain because he too lives in the limitations of weakness. That is why he has to make sin offerings for himself as well as for the people. No one takes this honour on himself, but each one is called by God, as Aaron was. Nor did Christ give himself the glory of becoming high priest, but he had it from the one who said to him: You are my son, today I have become your father, and in another text: You are a priest of the order of Melchizedek, and for ever.

As Jesus left Jericho with his disciples and a large crowd, Bartimaeus (that is, the son of Timaeus), a blind beggar, was sitting at the side of the road. When he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to shout and to say "Son of David, Jesus, have pity on me." And many of them scolded him and told him to keep quiet, but he only shouted all the louder, "Son of David, have pity on me." Jesus stopped and said, "Call him here." So they called the blind man. "Courage," they said "get up; he is calling you." So throwing off his cloak, he jumped up and went to Jesus. Then Jesus spoke, "What do you want me to do for you?" "Rabbuni," the blind man said to him "Master, let me see again." Jesus said to him, "Go; your faith has saved you." And immediately his sight returned and he followed him along the road.

Meditation

It is to the Christian community, hesitantly following Jesus on the road of his passion, that Mark reports the episode of the cure of Bartimaeus. Paradoxically, the blindness of this beggar, seated at the side of the road, does not keep him from perceiving more clearly than the crowd who Jesus is. He expresses his conviction by rejecting all support and jumping up toward the one who calls him and heals him. The clear-sightedness of faith not only saves us, but also commits us to the dynamism of conversion. As soon as he is healed, Bartimaeus, image of the faithful community and type of the perfect disciple, begins to follow Jesus along the road. Already a symbol of "those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death" (Luke 1:79), Bartimaeus now becomes the model of those who cry out, who pray to be delivered from their blindness, in order to set out on the way of peace. With the help of the Son of David, we too join the procession of those who believe, those who pray, those who see.