

Holy Half Hour for February 2017

The Lessons of a blind man

Hymn: (suitable hymn)

Introduction:

Today we celebrate the feast of St. Blaise, a Bishop and Martyr. St. Blaise was a physician and Bishop and is invoked for any ailments of the throat. On 11th February feast of Our Lady of Fatima is also celebrated as world day of the sick. All of us stand in need of healing, in different areas of our lives. Some need physical healing, some emotional healing, some psychological healing, some spiritual, etc. We have before us the divine healer Jesus himself. He can heal us from within to make us whole in body, mind and spirit, and transforms us to be His powerful instruments of healing in a broken world. Let us come before him with an open and welcoming heart.

Scripture reading: Mark 10:46-52 (to be read from the Bible) silence 5 mins

Reflection: Kindly read the reflection very slowly:

There are many passages of the Gospel that speak of miracles: Jesus, the Teacher, finds himself before an afflicted person, or before a possessed person, and he responds with a miracle. Wouldn't we love it if Jesus Christ performed a few miracles for us, if he solved this or that problem that we can't seem to work out? But God's ways are not man's. The Gospel that we consider today teaches us how to grow closer to Jesus, and perhaps that is more important than the granting of some miracle. **Pause**

1. On hearing that it was Jesus of Nazareth.

Let us imagine the scene: Bartimaeus, a poor blind man, hears something strange going on around him; those around him seem strangely transformed. "What is going on?" he asks. Someone in the crowd answers him: "Here comes the rabbi from Galilee named Jesus." Bartimaeus had heard a lot about this teacher, that he preached in a wholly different way, a way that called out to those who heard him, and that he had healed many.

Wishing to be healed, Bartimaeus wants to come closer to the Lord. In order to do so, he uses every means at his disposal. He is not held back by his blindness, or even by the difficulty he has moving. He resorts to his only available option: yelling and shouting in hopes of getting Jesus' attention. Do we have as strong a desire to come closer to Christ, to speak with him through prayer? Do we use every means we possibly can to come closer to the only person who can save us? **Pause for silent reflection.**

2. "But he kept calling out all the more."

Soon difficulties arise. Those near the blind man scold him: "Leave the Master alone; he can't hear you." How many times do we hear a voice inside us say: "Stop praying; it never does any good. Your life hasn't changed. Don't waste your time." That is the voice of Satan trying to discourage us. In those moments, we should remember what

Bartimaeus did: "But he kept calling all the more, 'Son of David, have pity on me.'"

Pause

Every good sailor knows that when the storm hits, that's when you have to fight even harder to keep control of the ship. Every good soccer player knows that when his team is losing, he has to play even harder if he wants to turn the game around. Every good business man knows that when business starts to go badly, you have to work even harder to avoid bankruptcy. Every good mother knows that when her child is sick she has to take even better care of him. Why don't we do the same thing when we encounter difficulties in our daily life or our spiritual life? **Pause for silent reflection.**

3. "Go your way; your faith has saved you."

Jesus, just as he did on so many other occasions, takes time to provide for the needs of men. He is not indifferent to our prayers; he cannot ignore anyone who asks for mercy. On this occasion he turns to the blind man and asks "What can I do for you?" Jesus is not satisfied with merely offering a few words of consolation, with simply telling him "Buck up, my man, it'll be fine." No, Jesus Christ sees the necessity of the blind man, hears his petition, has pity on him, and gives him a miraculous gift. **Pause**

Why don't we get what we ask God for? Perhaps it is because we do not draw near to him with the faith and stubborn dedication of Bartimaeus; with a constant fight to be faithful in our relationship with him, in our times of prayer, and in living our Christian lives. Or could it be that the Lord, who is infinitely wiser than we are, will grant us the miracle that we most need, which is often not the one that we ask for. **Pause for silent reflection.**

Intercessions

Leader: The Lord has worked marvels for us, so we bring forward our prayers with confidence.

Response: Lord, hear our prayer.

1. Let us pray for our Pope, bishops and priests who in their pastoral care may not make any distinction based on social status and economic clout of the faithful but extend their care to one and all. (Pause). We pray to the Lord.
2. For all who suffer —mentally, physically or spiritually — that they may experience the healing power of Christ in the Church. (Pause). We pray to the Lord.
3. For a spirit of service: that we may use our time and ability to help others overcome obstacles and find ways to use their gifts. (Pause). We pray to the Lord.
4. For all who are searching for God: that their eyes and hearts may be opened to the many manifestations of God's love for them. (Pause). We pray to the Lord.
5. For the light of Faith: that our eyes may be opened and we may reverence the presence of Jesus in the Eucharist, in one another, and in the broken and hurting members of Christ's body. (Pause). We pray to the Lord.

6. For refugees and migrants, that wealthy nations may welcome and support the needy. (Pause). We pray to the Lord.
7. Pray for you own personal and local needs. (Pause). We pray to the Lord.

Leader: O Lord, we rejoice in your marvelous kindness and bring forward all our needs: we entrust them to you with faith and confidence, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Benediction hymn: Let us bow in adoration

Divine Praises:

Concluding Hymn: (suitable hymn)

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For the
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