

Homily 30th Sunday Year B 2021

The fact that Bartimaeus followed Jesus and probably gave his life to preaching the gospel is why they knew his name. Throwing off his cloak and leaving it behind is significant. His cloak was his sole possession. This gesture meant he was giving up everything and placing his complete trust in Jesus to heal him. Jesus clearly recognised the gesture and responded to Bartimaeus' faith as he said, *"Your faith has saved you!"* One commentator points out that Bartimaeus does not ask for sight, he asks to **see**. He wanted much more than sight. Seeing isn't limited to seeing the blue of the sky or the road to home. It is also about seeing the truth about things, or even of seeing the Truth himself. Like Bartimaeus we come to Christ asking, even crying out, that we may see; to see the presence of God in us and around us, in the people we encounter and in the earth that God created. Rather than just see evil, injustice and abuse, to see the internal struggles, failings, brokenness and sufferings in people's lives; and to see all this with a deep desire to respond with care, compassion and healing.

The Synodal pathway we are called to follow wants us to **see**, in the path we have travelled through the pandemic to the present, how God has been present or absent in our lives. How the Church has helped and not helped and to hear your hopes for the future.

The Synod wants to help the People of God, (faithful/laity) and Church to move from being hierarchical to being differentiated and complementary. Since the bishops need religious and laypeople to accomplish their mission in the Church, it seeks to share this responsibility with them.

This is a Kairos moment for the Church as it seeks to develop a new culture in which Bishops, clergy, laity, and theologians work together. Synodality, the name of this process, not only expresses our diversity but seeks to strengthen the involvement of all of its participants. Since synodality is of the "essence of the Church", in moving forward in a synodal way – journeying together - we will evolve into a more complete form of Church.

Furthermore, synodality enables the whole People of God to walk forward together, listening to the Holy Spirit and the Word of God, and participating in the mission of the Church in the communion that Christ establishes between us.

Ultimately, this path of walking together and talking to each other on the way is the most effective way of manifesting and putting into practice the nature of the Church as a pilgrim and missionary People of God.

So, let us find in God our unity so that we may journey together to eternal life and not stray from the way of truth or from what is right.

Shortly after starting school, the six-year-old boy hopped into bed without first kneeling to pray, something his mother had taught him to do from an early age. Surprised, she challenged him: *"Don't you pray anymore?"*

He said *"No, I don't. My school-teacher told us that we are not supposed to pray. She said that we're supposed to talk to God. Well! Tonight, I'm tired and have nothing to say!"*