

Commentary on the Gospel for Thu, May 30th 2024

Let us never despair

The Gospel passage recounts the cure of the blind man of Jericho, Bartimaeus. He heard that Jesus was passing by, understood that it was the opportunity of his life and acted swiftly.

Bartimaeus is not blind; he is only sightless. He sees better with his heart than many of those around him, because he has faith and cherishes hope. More than that, it is this interior vision of faith that also helps him to recover his external vision of things. “Your faith has made you well,” Jesus says to him.

There are some temptations for those who follow Jesus. The Gospel describes two of them in today’s passage. None of the disciples stopped at the cry of Bartimaeus on the road. They continued to walk and even tried to stop him from crying out. If Bartimaeus was blind, they were deaf: his problem was not their problem.

This is a temptation for us, too: when confronted with problems, we prefer to move away as if we did not know. Just like the disciples, although we are with Jesus, but we do not think like him and refuse to respond like him.

There is a second temptation, that of falling into a “scheduled faith”. We are able to walk with the People of God, but we already have our schedule for the journey, where everything is listed: we know where to go and how long it will take; we expect everyone to respect our rhythm. Thus, we run the risk of becoming those “many” of the Gospel who lose patience and rebuke Bartimaeus. Just a short time before, they scolded the children (cf. 10:13), and now the blind beggar: whoever disturbs our schedule is excluded.

Bartimaeus represents people who experience the miseries of life and feel sunken, depressed, and alone. But, he teaches us a lesson in perseverance. Let us never despair. God’s compassion will never fail us.