

## Thirtieth Sunday of Ordinary Time

### Gospel Reading

28th October 2018

Mark 10:46-52

*Jesus restores sight to the blind man, Bartimaeus*

### Background on the Gospel Reading

Today we continue to read from Mark's Gospel. In this Gospel, we find evidence of Jesus' fame in the sizable crowd that accompanies him as he journeys to Jerusalem.

Jesus' reputation as a healer has preceded him. When the blind man, Bartimaeus, hears that Jesus of Nazareth is passing by, he calls out to him, asking for his pity.

When Bartimaeus calls out to Jesus, the crowd around him tries to silence him. Yet

Bartimaeus persists, calling out more loudly and with greater urgency. He will not be silenced or deterred from getting Jesus' attention. We notice how quickly the crowd's reaction changes when Jesus calls for

Bartimaeus. Those who sought to quiet him now encourage him.

When Jesus restores Bartimaeus's sight, no elaborate action is required. (In other healing stories in Mark's Gospel, actions accompany Jesus' words). In this instance, Jesus simply says that Bartimaeus's faith has saved him. Throughout Mark's Gospel, the success of

Jesus' healing power has often been correlated with the faith of the person requesting Jesus' help. For example, it is because of her faith that the woman with the hemorrhage is healed. When faith is absent, Jesus is unable to heal; we see this after his rejection in Nazareth.

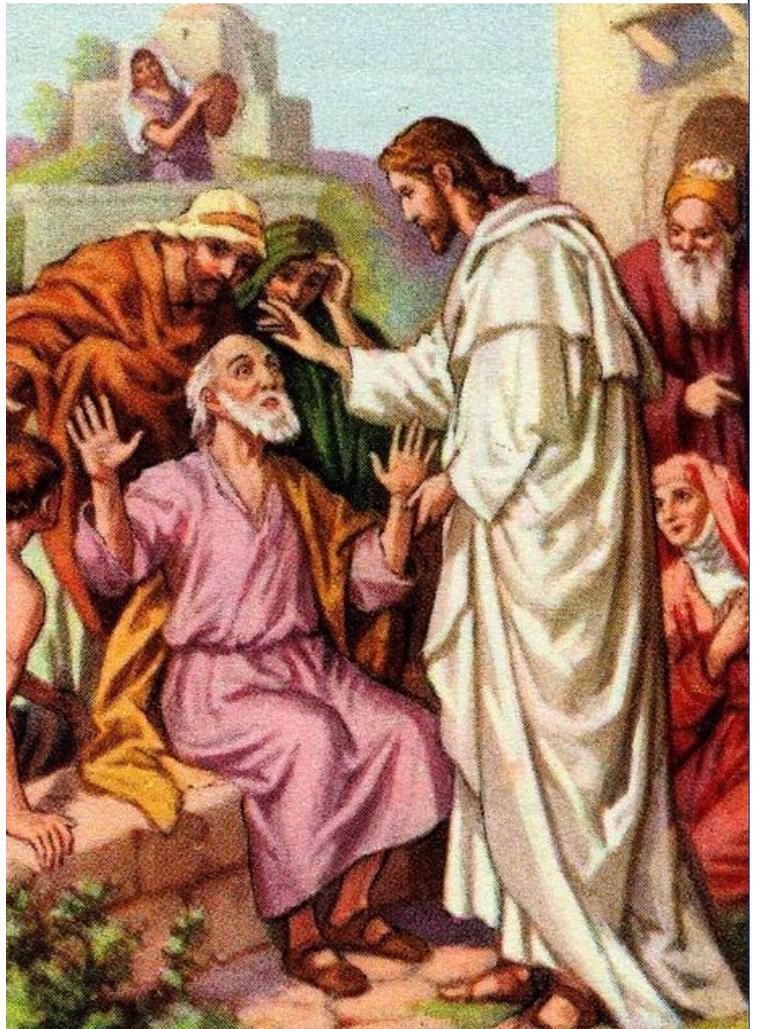
Once his sight has been restored, Bartimaeus follows Jesus on his way to Jerusalem. In Mark's Gospel, Bartimaeus is the last disciple called by Jesus before he enters Jerusalem. Bartimaeus hears that Jesus of

Nazareth is passing by, but he calls out to Jesus using words of faith—"Son of David." Many in

Jesus' time believed that the anticipated Jewish Messiah would be a descendent of King David.

Bartimaeus's words prepare us for the final episodes of Mark's Gospel, which begin with Jesus' preparation for the Passover and his triumphant entry into Jerusalem. As Mark has shown us in our readings over the past few Sundays, however, Jesus will be the Messiah in a way that will be difficult for many to accept. Jesus will show himself to be the Messiah through his suffering and death.

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