

Lenten Devotional March 23, 2024

Scripture

Mark 10:46-52

46 They came to Jericho. As he and his disciples and a large crowd were leaving Jericho, Bartimaeus son of Timaeus, a blind beggar, was sitting by the roadside. 47 When he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to shout out and say, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" 48 Many sternly ordered him to be quiet, but he cried out even more loudly, "Son of David, have mercy on me!" 49 Jesus stood still and said, "Call him here." And they called the blind man, saying to him, "Take heart; get up, he is calling you." 50 So throwing off his cloak, he sprang up and came to Jesus. 51 Then Jesus said to him, "What do you want me to do for you?" The blind man said to him, "My teacher, let me see again." 52 Jesus said to him, "Go; your faith has made you well." Immediately he regained his sight and followed him on the way.

Devotion

The Rev. Helen Kester '06

Tomorrow is Palm Sunday and the beginning of Holy Week. Today we sit with blind Bartimaeus in the dark unable to see Jesus approaching. As we look at our world, we see wars and murder; we hear of human trafficking and child abduction and addictions to everything from drugs to work, and we yearn to be blind to the needs that surround us and deaf to the cries of pain that assail us. But the words of Mark and the story of Bartimaeus draw us into the hope of belief in the redeeming work of Jesus the Christ. Jesus calls us to him. We can tell him the pain, the sorrow, and our feelings of being overwhelmed by the demands of the world. He hears. Jesus knows all our concerns and asks us, "What do you want me to do for you?"

We are each asked that by our Savior. Too often we forget that Jesus wants us to be honest with ourselves and him. We try to hide our pain, our feelings of inadequacy, and the overwhelming sense that we cannot carry all our burdens. Jesus knows and is calling us to him and asking what we need. We need not hide. Like Bartimaeus, we are invited to shout out to Jesus, "Have mercy on me!" What are you lugging into Holy Week that Jesus wants to help carry? Do you have an illness, are you caring for someone who is ill? Or is it relationship problems, money issues, problems at work, or just a general feeling of dismay with the world in which we live? Whatever the burden that is making you blind to the love and hope of the Easter message, tell it to Jesus. Give it to him and accept his help and the strength of the Holy Spirit.

Prayer

Jesus who searches and calls to us, help us to hear and respond. Help us to name our needs and accept your help and guidance, in your holy name. Amen.