

2018.10.28 Sunday Homily by Fr. Gabor

‘Master Let me See Again’

Today’s Gospel reading reminds us of our own spiritual blindness, how we can keep each other in the dark knowingly or even unknowingly, and what is needed to gain or even regain our spiritual sight.

I am sure you have thought about at least once in your lifetime ‘What would it be like meeting with God face to face and seeing what he looks like?’ or how good it would be to know God’s will or plan for you.’

I have mentioned to most of you before the BBC documentary about the man who has lost his sight and then had two children, but he could never see his children’s face smiling, and how much he longed he would be able to see them. A Chinese method of implanting a small bit of tooth into the eye brought back his eyesight and he could see his children’s face first time in his life. It was a cathartic experience for him.

I am sure seeing the fullness of reality as it really is will be a cathartic experience for us at the end of time, when all that is hidden will be revealed.

For a spiritual way of seeing we need to open the eyes of faith. As the letter to the Hebrews says ‘faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see’ (Heb 11:1). So faith is about a confident decision to accept the existence of what we cannot see.

But it is worth noting in today’s Gospel story that the people try to dampen the voice of the blind man, which loudly speaks about his faith in Christ. They tried to stop him partly because he was a beggar and partly because he was blind, ie. a person who according to Jewish tradition has lost God’s favour. Notice that he wanted to see AGAIN, ie. he used to have eyesight, but he had lost it because he must have done something bad so God took away his eyesight. By granting the blind man’s wish Jesus says that this is a false belief!

I think today it is not just others who try to dampen our faith, but we ourselves also dampen our own faith. How? In many ways, especially when life and relationships get tough; for example when you face

serious illness or even loss and when things don't go the way you wish and understandably you may get depressed or negative about life. However these experiences shouldn't necessarily affect our faith, but when we do let them control our thoughts then we also let our faith be dampened. Faith is not a product of our feelings and experiences, but an act of decision to listen to and accept the Word of God about hidden realities.

So in order to protect that faith decision and even grow in faith through those difficult times, we willingly and consciously have to clear the way for our faith to come to the surface according to what St. Paul advises (Colossians 3:2-3): 'Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God, and also in his letter to the Philippians (4:8-9) he writes: 'my friends, fill your minds with those things that are good and that deserve praise: things that are true, noble, right, pure, lovely, and honourable.' We can do so by prayer and by reading the Bible, listening to inspiring people and learning from the life example of holy people who quietly live among us and our faith will grow.

We as parents, grandparents, godparents, colleagues or people who are responsible for the spiritual care of others need to use these various resources to encourage them to come to believe or to grow in faith. This is what spiritual fruitfulness means according to the Catechism's teaching on marriage and fruitfulness. You can only do so much, eventually they have the decision if they keep the faith or not, but when you see that someone came to believe or kept the faith, because of your help it is a wonderful experience.