

Almighty and everlasting God, increase in us the gifts of faith, hope, and charity; and, that we may obtain what you promise, make us love what you command; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

### LOOK

Share a time when your sight changed dramatically. What did you see that you had never seen before? Or what could you no longer see? How was that for you?

### BOOK

#### Mark 10:46-52

46They 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.

47When he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to shout out and say, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!"

48Many sternly ordered him to be quiet, but he cried out even more loudly, "Son of David, have mercy on me!" 49Jesus stood still and said, "Call him here." And they called the blind man, saying to him, "Take heart; get up, he is calling you." 50So throwing off his cloak, he sprang up and came to Jesus. 51Then 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." 52Jesus said to him, "Go; your

faith has made you well." Immediately he regained his sight and followed him on the way.

- 1) Blindness was considered punishment by God. Bartimaeus was reduced to begging and was totally marginalized. How is sight used as a metaphor in Mark's gospel? How do we marginalize people who don't 'see' the way we do?
- 2) Bartimaeus, although physically blind, 'saw' the truth about who Jesus was, although the disciples did not. How does his greeting – "Jesus, son of David, have mercy on me" express his belief? How would you define mercy?
- 3) Compare and contrast last week's gospel about James and John with today's gospel. How does the request of Bartimaeus compare with what the disciples asked for in Mark 10:35-45?
- 4) Discuss the significance of Bartimaeus' cloak. It was probably his only possession. How does it define him? When does he throw it off? When is his sight restored? What does this sequence say about his faith?

### TOOK

- 1) The greeting of Bartimaeus is known now as the Jesus Prayer: "Lord Jesus Christ, son of the Living

God, have mercy on me, a sinner.”

Discuss how and when you might use this prayer. What does it say about God? What does it say about you?

- 2) What cloak do you need to throw off? What chains or binds you or keeps you blind?
- 3) What cost is there to seeing? This is the last story of healing in Mark before Jesus goes to Jerusalem and the cross. Also, this is the only story of healing in which the person healed follows Jesus. How are these facts significant to us?
- 4) Jesus invites us into new life today. Now. Not when we have everything figured out. Not when we have the time or inclination. Discuss tangible ways you can change your life to “live like his love is true”. What will you see differently? How will you act?

Faith is not absolute certainty. “Faith is the decision to keep your eyes open.” Doris Betts