

# Sunday Morning Resources

Sunday 27 October 2024 - The Last Sunday After Trinity

**Lectionary Readings** (depending on the kind of service you are leading, you may use one or more of the following readings – however, you **must** use the gospel reading, as this is what the homily is based on)

Jeremiah 31.7-9; Psalm 126; Hebrews 7. 23-end; Mark 10.46-end

## Homily

**Today's homily has been written by Mrs Pat Blyth, LLM, The Mission & Ministry Department, Ely Diocese**

We know from the Gospels that Jesus cured a great many people of their illnesses and disabilities. The question that springs to mind about the story of blind Bartimaeus is why did this miracle merit inclusion rather than so many others? Why did the Gospel writers remember this particular event, when they came to record the life and times of Jesus some considerable time later? In Mark's 'bare bones' way of recording things, there is more that is unsaid than said in this account. There are slightly different versions in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke. In Mark, it is the last recorded miracle that took place just as Jesus is about to head for Jerusalem, and the final week of his earthly life. So, it was obviously important to Mark, but why?

Who was Bartimaeus? 'Bar' followed by a name simply means 'son of' that person. So Bartimaeus is someone who doesn't even merit a name of his own, he is the son of someone called Timaeus, a name with Greek origins. This man was therefore apparently an anonymous foreigner, disabled from birth, and in the age in which he lived, an outcast from society. Not for him the opportunity and support available today, nor any chance to better his lot – no Braille, adapted work station, Personal Independence Payments or encouragement to participate in the Paralympics. Bartimaeus was obliged to beg in the streets of Jericho – not someone to be on display when a renowned teacher rumoured to be the promised Messiah is visiting the area.

So, Bartimaeus shouts – appealing to Jesus as Son of David, one of the titles given to the Messiah in the Old Testament – and he refuses to be silenced. And despite the efforts of the crowd, Jesus calls the blind man forward, and grants his wish to see again on account of his great faith. Told in such a way, it all seems to have happened in an instant.

Herein lies the reason for the inclusion of this miracle; Jesus knew Bartimaeus before he got to Jericho, knew him in the way that we believe he knows each one of us – the number of the hairs on our heads, the innermost thought and workings of our minds and hearts. Jesus knew that Bartimaeus believed in him without demanding any affirmation; Jesus has mercy on Bartimaeus without hearing any words of repentance about sins. Many miracles that are recorded only follow on from either such an affirmation, or confession. Bartimaeus appears

to do neither, which means that in this instance, Jesus has taken these things for granted. Jesus recognised faith demonstrated in the Bartimaeus' determination to be heard.

There are other Gospel stories in which Jesus has an uncanny knack of knowing the person, or the circumstances, ahead of the events that subsequently take place. One such is the story of the woman at the well in Samaria, who had had five husbands, and was living with a sixth man. Jesus knows all this about her without being told – and sends his disciples off in search of food, so he can speak to her alone. Another example is the woman with a haemorrhage of blood who tries simply to touch his robe so that she can be cured without alerting the crowd to her condition. Jesus seems to know when we need to find him, and he makes sure that in that moment, we can do so. The woman at the well was granted forgiveness, and the chance to turn her life around; the woman with the haemorrhage is cured, and Bartimaeus is rewarded with his eyes opened both literally and metaphorically to the world.

That is how it is with God, there is nothing that cannot be sorted out for those with faith, and the miracles that Jesus performs are glimpses of the kingdom of God that break into ordinary existence like shafts of sunlight on a cloudy day. Restoring people either as individuals, or collectively as nations or states, is very much the theme in all of today's readings. The prophet Jeremiah, writing many centuries before the time of Jesus, foretelling the Exile of the Jews and how that would eventually end, writes;

“See, I am going to bring them from the land of the north,  
And gather them from the farthest parts of the earth,  
Among them the blind and the lame, those with child and those in labour,  
Together; a great company, they shall return here.”

And the Psalm for today, number 126, tells of the delight felt by the Jews upon their return from Exile and their restored fortune by praying:

“May those who sow in tears reap with shouts of joy.”

And the letter to the Hebrews, speaking about Jesus as the great High Priest, says:

“Consequently, he is able for all time to save those who approach God through Him, since he always lives to make intercession for them.”

Jesus is no longer here to work miracles. What he can still do is intercede with God on our behalf, knowing as he does everything about us and what our needs and wants are, and what is best for us, such as our need for forgiveness, healing, wholeness, hope. The inclusion of Bartimaeus in Mark's Gospel gives us an example of how much the love of God reaches out to even the very least of us, and gathers us all in. Amen.

### ***Ways to Engage all Generations***

When different generations are gathered together in worship there is an opportunity to build relationships and to encounter God in our conversations as we build relationships and learn from each other no matter what our ages, stage of life or faith and for all present to feel included. Adding some wondering questions to the service at an appropriate moment can help to do this.

Wondering Questions: Some wondering questions that may help to engage all generations to ponder and explore during the talk, service or during the week may include (three or so) of the following style of questions:

- I wonder what your favourite part of the story/passage is? I wonder why that is?
- I wonder who your favourite character is? I wonder why that is?
- I wonder how \_\_\_\_\_ felt or I wonder how \_\_\_\_\_ felt when \_\_\_\_\_ happened?
- I wonder how you feel about \_\_\_\_\_?
- I wonder where you are in this story?
- I wonder what part of the story is about you?
- I wonder what the [tree, pearl, coin] could really be?
- I wonder why \_\_\_\_\_ said \_\_\_\_\_?
- I wonder what we can learn about God in this story?

### ***Suggested intercessions***

The Collect for the last Sunday after Trinity:

Blessed Lord,  
who caused all holy Scriptures to be written for our learning:  
help us so to hear them,  
to read, mark, learn and inwardly digest them  
that, through patience and the comfort of your holy word,  
we may embrace and forever hold fast  
the hope of everlasting life,  
which you have given us in our Saviour Jesus Christ,  
who is alive and reigns with you,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and forever.

Lord, on this Bible Sunday, we give you thanks for the Trinity season in which we have read, discussed and understood more of your holy Scriptures, the meanings and messages of which are inexhaustible. Thank you for those people of ancient times who recorded these things in such a way that we can still benefit from them today, the historians and chroniclers, the poets and philosophers, the story tellers, and writers of letters. We give thanks for those whose life's work has been to translate the Bible into various languages so that it can be shared across the world, and for the various organisations that have fostered the propagation of your Word : the Bible Society, Bible Reading Fellowship, Scripture Union, the Gideons, and others.

Lord, in your mercy.....**Hear our Prayer.**

Lord, grant that as we read the Bible, we may take its message of your love out into a needy world. Let those who believe in your name be at the forefront of bringing peace where there is conflict, hope where there is sadness, food and drink where there is hunger and

thirst, care and comfort where there is illness and pain. Especially we pray for the Middle East, Ukraine, Sudan, and the many nations, including our own, where there is suffering.

Lord, in your mercy.....**Hear our Prayer.**

We pray for this church of.....and for all who serve here, (*names of Clergy, Lay Ministers, Churchwardens, etc.*). Bless Bishop Dagmar and the Diocese of Ely as it continues to search for a new Bishop, and all those in leadership roles in our various churches. We also pray for all leaders in government here and abroad, that they too may be informed by the Bible and endeavour to rule their countries in such a way that builds up the common good. And we remember before you King Charles, Queen Camilla and all our Royal Family.

Lord, in your mercy.....**Hear our Prayer.**

As the season of Remembrance approaches, we give thanks for all your Saints who with Jesus, intercede on our behalf, especially St Simon and St Jude, whose feast day is tomorrow, and for the souls of all our departed loved ones. (*Names of anyone local...*). As the year starts to turn from Autumn into Winter, let us reflect on the past year and its various joys and sorrows as we prepare our hearts to look forward again to the celebration of the coming into the world of our Lord Jesus at Christmas time.

Merciful Father.....**accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.**

**The Lord's Prayer.**

### **Suggested hymns/songs**

Come, Holy Ghost, our Souls Inspire  
Hark my Soul, it is the Lord  
Immortal, Invisible, God only wise  
Lord for the Years  
Lord, thy word abideth  
Seek Ye first the Kingdom of God  
The Lord I my Light (chant)  
Thou whose Almighty Word  
We have a Gospel to proclaim

### **Activities to accompany the service:**

If you are looking for resources to accompany the service for engaging younger children, then there are lots of online resources. The following free to access/download resources may be useful starting points:

- <https://flamecreativekids.blogspot.com/>
- <https://www.pinterest.co.uk/MessyChurchBRF/>
- <https://www.faithinkids.org/>

- [reflectionary.org](https://www.reflectionary.org) – lectionary-based resources
- [engageworship](https://www.engageworship.com) – in particular 'Area 52' for lectionary-based material
- <https://www.bdeducation.org.uk/product-category/primary-age-5-11/>  
(weekly@lectionary resource)