30 B

# MDP of God

Several years ago- shortly after I was ordained- I had a couple who had come in to see me who were having struggles in their marriage

And I met with each one of them individually- and the wife at one point said to me, “Father, we wouldn’t have any problems- if he’d just do what I tell him to do”

Now these were both very nice people – and they did at that time work out their problems

But I couldn’t help but think at the time, “*Lady, you’re* ***not seeing*** *the whole picture here”*

# In our gospel today we hear the story of blind Bartimaeus

And St Mark in writing this wants us to contrast Bartimaeus with others in the gospel

Bartimaeus **recognizes** *that he’s blind* and he asks Jesus to heal him – and that contrasts with several other people *who aren’t seeing the whole picture*, but who don’t realize their blind

For instance in last week’s gospel James and John had just heard that Jesus was to be arrested – he’d be rejected by the priests and leaders of the people – he’d be handed over to the Gentiles *and be beaten – scourged* **and killed**

And James and John go to Him ***at that point*** and say, “Jesus we want you to do something for us”

And Jesus says to them what He said to Bartimaeus today – He says, “What do you want me to do for you?”

And they basically said, “Give us glory – give us honor- give us authority- put us one at your right and one at your left when you enter your kingdom”

At that Jesus basically gathers the apostles *and says, “Guys, you’re not getting it!* Can’t you see that I’m here to serve and you need to do the same? Can’t you see that? Are you blind?”

James and John had a spiritual blindness *and they didn’t know it*- Bartimaeus – at least he recognized that he was blind

The same was true with the scribes and Pharisees

They had God in front of them – they had the long awaited Savior right before their eyes- ***they couldn’t see-*** *in fact they thought they saw someone who was evil* – someone who was a blasphemer- someone who offended God

The scribes and Pharisees were a lot like Mr. McGoo- remember him – he was blind as a bat- but he kept driving – kept going places and doing things totally oblivious to what was really around him

That’s the scribes and Pharisees- *they had God before them and they failed to see*

They didn’t say, “Lord I want to see- *because they didn’t want to see-* they didn’t want to be open- they didn’t want to question their pre-conceived notions

My friends that prayer of Bartimaeus needs to be our prayer – “Lord I want to see- *Lord let me see what* **you see**”

Because we can be like Mr. McGoo- we can be blind to the reality that God wants us to see

Let me just give a few examples

There are many people today who look at the world and say- “I don’t want to bring kids into this world- this world is so messed up – this world is so corrupt – this world is so hopeless- I don’t want to bring kids into it”

And yet God every day creates roughly 385,000 babies—140 million a year throughout the world- as Catholics we of course believe that every soul is created individually by God- He gives our parents the ability to create our bodies- *but He creates every soul*- with God there are no mistakes

And so every day throughout the world God says- I see so much hope for this world- I see so many possibilities- I see so many opportunities to grow in love- to do good work – to live lives of love

Satan wants us to look at the world and see no hope – see nothing but evil and corruption –/// *but that’s not what God sees* or He wouldn’t create millions of people every year

Are we blind to what God sees? If we are we need to pray Bartimaeus’ prayer, “Lord I want to see – let me see what you see”

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There are many people today who look at the people around them- and ***all they see*** ***are*** people you can’t trust- people who are imperfect- people who they want nothing to do with

*There are some who look at the human race with contempt* – **they can’t stand people** – they want nothing to do with people- they’ve been hurt by people and they’re not going to let themselves be hurt again

But you know God looks at the same world – *and sees a world worth saving*- He sees a world that He loved and sent His Son to save

***He sees*** people who [absolutely] are imperfect - (but) people who are in His image and likeness whom He loves- people who are worth sending His Son too – people He loved so much that He allowed His Son to suffer and die for their salvation- people who He allows to receive the Body and Blood of His Son in the Holy Eucharist

When you look at the world- **what do you see?-** Do you focus on the bad- do you focus on what’s wrong- or do you see what God sees?

If you focus on the negative you need to pray the prayer of Bartimaeus- “Lord I want to see- let me see what you see”

There are husbands and wives who look at their spouse and *all they see is* what bugs them – what they don’t like – what they want changed

At times they refuse to see the person they fell in love with- who often works hard for the good of their family – who has made sacrifices for their children- gets up and goes to work every day to a job they might not like for the good of their family

*And all they see is what’s wrong*

If that’s the case in your life you need to pray the prayer of Bartimaeus- “Lord I want to see” – Let me see the goodness that’s there- sacrifices that he or she has made- the person I fell in love with

There are many people who look at themselves – and all they see is their faults – all they see is what’s wrong with them – all they see is how they’re not good enough- their too fat or too skinny- too boring or not funny enough [Also unfortunately there are people who look at themselves and see nothing wrong and so they make no effort to grow in holiness – *but that’s another homily*]- So there are many who see only the negative in themselves

But God looks at those same people and sees someone He loves – someone He sent Jesus to save- someone who can (with His grace) become holy - *someone who precious to Him*

When you look at yourself – if you don’t see that, you need to pray the prayer of Bartimaeus- “Lord, I want to see- let me see what you see”

In our 2nd reading today from Hebrews –it spoke of the gift of the priesthood—and how Jesus was a priest in the line of Melchizedek

Hebrews speaks of the priesthood as an incredible gift to the world---even the Old Testament priesthood---that doesn’t begin to compare with the New Testament priesthood

 And as Hebrews taught—all priests have struggled with sin

 Think of the high priest Caiphas---who plotted against Jesus

Even the high priest Aaron---Aaron was the one who made the golden calf in the dessert with the Israelites---that was a huge sin

Throughout history there have been many priests who failed to strive for holiness---but there have been many priest who did strive for holiness and became very holy men—who became saints

Unfortunately many today focus on the sins of priests---especially on the sins of priests who very much betraye God—betrayed the Church—betrayed their vocation

But Hebrews makes it clear that the priesthood is a gift to the world---it’s an incredible gift to the men who have been called to the priesthood

I know in my own life I can pray with the psalmist in today’s psalm, “**The Lord has done great things for us; we are filled with joy.”**

The priesthood has been an incredible lessing in my life---an incredible blessing

That’s not to say there haven’t been struggles—*but every life includes struggles*---over all, my priesthood had brought incredible joy into my life---it’s been a great gift to me ---and it’s a great gift to the Church

But right now---there’s a huge shortage of priests

I can’t help but to think it’s because many people today have focused on the priests who’ve betrayed the calling---that is that many people are blind to the precious gift that the priesthood is to the Church—as well as the gift it is to individual priests who strive to be faithful to God

So I ask you ---are you blind to the gift the priesthood is? Do you only focus on the priests who have betrayed God and the Church?

I ask young men—have you considered the gift of the priesthood as something God might be calling you too? Or do you only focus on what you wouldn’t be able to have

I know when I was in the seminary---my biggest struggle was that I wanted to get married and have my own children---but I came to see God was calling me to trust in His plan for my life

I took that leap of faith---and I can honestly say---that while there are struggles---the priesthood has led me to a life of great joy and fulfillment

Are you blind to the gift the priesthood is to the Church? Are you blind to the gift the priesthood could be in the life of you—or your children—or your grandchildren?

My friends, Bartimaeus had an advantage over most of us – ***he knew*** he was blind – he knew that Jesus could give him his sight – he knew there was something wrong with him *that needed changing*

 James and John didn’t realize their blindness

The scribes and Pharisees didn’t recognize their blindness and their need to be healed from it

My friends, oftentimes we don’t recognize our blindness- and our need to be healed

 If you look at our world and all you see what’s wrong- if you look at other people and only see evil- if you look at your spouse or members of your family and only see what you don’t like – if you look at yourself and only see faults and failings---if you look at the gift of priesthood and only see the priests who’ve betrayed God and the Church--- then you need to pray with Bartimaeus- “Lord, I want to see- Lord let me see what you see”

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One last thing—we have a Marian Day of prayer coming up on November 6th—there’s a special table in the Gathering Space with flyers and a registration form

 I really want to invite you to come to the day

Fr Kevin Barret who is the spiritual director for the Apostolate for family consecration will be leading us that day

It’s a day for both men and women=== I know in my own life---Mary has done so much to help me grow in my love for Jesus

So I’d invite you to make time for the Blessed Mother---so that she can lead you to a deeper love of your Savior