



Bringing Home the Word

Thirtieth Sunday in Ordinary Time, October 25, 2015

Putting Our Eyes In

By Janel Esker

I'm generally a morning person, but I'm far from perky before I put in my contact lenses. That brief period in which I stumble out of bed toward the bathroom to "put my eyes in" is the closest I've come to being blind.

Though I go through this ritual every morning, I still take the gift of sight for granted. Probably many of us do. When we open our eyes each day, we simply expect to see. What a shock it must be to gradually or suddenly lose that ability.

We don't know how Bartimaeus lost his sight, but though he lacked physical sight, he possessed an even greater gift—the eyes of faith. Somehow he'd heard about Jesus, and he believed.

The crowds couldn't discourage Bartimaeus from calling out to Jesus. And when Jesus answered, Bartimaeus "threw aside his cloak." As a beggar, Bartimaeus gathered alms in his cloak, so he was leaving behind all the money he'd gathered that day—such was his trust. For his great faith, he was given his sight, and he responded in gratitude by following Jesus.

I'm guessing we take for granted not only the gift of sight but also the gift of faith. Like physical sight, faith isn't our own doing—it's a gift from God. Are we using this gift as well as Bartimaeus did, trusting in God no matter who or what discourages us?

If we need help, we need only call out to Jesus. If we're stumbling and need help "putting our eyes (of faith) in," we can say today with Bartimaeus, "Master, I want to see." †

A Word from Pope Francis

There are two opposing cultures. The culture of encounter and the culture of exclusion.... Precisely because of their fragility, their limitations, the sick and disabled can become witnesses of the encounter: the encounter with Jesus, which opens them to life and faith, and to encounter others, with the community. Indeed, only those who recognize their own fragility, their own limitations, can build fraternal and solid relationships in the Church and in society."



—Address to the Apostolic Movement of the Blind (MAC) and the Little Mission for the Deaf and Mute, March 29, 2014

Sunday Readings

Jeremiah 31:7–9

"The LORD has saved his people, the remnant of Israel."

Hebrews 5:1–6

"Every high priest is taken from among men...to offer gifts and sacrifices...."

Mark 10:46–52

"Go your way; your faith has saved you."



Lord, I am grateful you came to heal the brokenhearted. Help me to trust in you when I am in trouble.

—From *Grateful Meditations for Every Day in Ordinary Time*,
Rev. Warren J. Savage
and Mary Ann McSweeney

The Good Buddy

By Bruce Adkins

Wally would tell the drivers and customers each morning, “This is the day the Lord has made.” Wally was tall, thin with big ears, and always dressed in his ball cap, white shirt, baggy overalls, and lace-up boots. He’d look at Hank with a grin and a stare. “You need to cheer up, good buddy. Don’t you know God’s in charge?”

Hank Daniels, the manager of the truck stop, twenty-five and just out of college, didn’t believe in religion. He was concerned that Wally’s Bible talk might run off his business. He wasn’t sure how to reason with Wally, but he had more important problems. His wife was expecting a baby, and he had posted a “Busboy Wanted” sign two weeks ago near the register and another on the door, but the only one to apply was Wally. “There’s no way I’m going to hire a mentally disabled person for the job,” he told Blondie, the head server.

But one morning, two employees didn’t show up for work. With nowhere else to turn, Hank approached Wally, and Wally jumped at the chance. “I’ll sure be much obliged,” he said. “Of course, I always wanted to be a mailman. I don’t guess it matters much, ’cause the Lord...” he trailed off. “The Lord provides.” Wally donned an apron and ran around trying to clean the tables.

The first day, he broke dishes, scattered meatloaf, spilled hot water, and removed a customer’s food before he was through eating. Hank would have fired Wally that day if it hadn’t been for Blondie. Over time, with her tutelage,



REFLECTION QUESTIONS



- What do I want Jesus to do for me?
- Am I blind to or lacking compassion for any part of humanity?

Wally became adept. The salt and pepper shakers were always in place, and there was no sign of spillage or crumbs when Wally finished cleaning.

The customers tended to overlook or tease him. Even though business was good, Hank admonished Wally to stop annoying the drivers. One day Wally, his cart loaded high with dirty dishes, shocked Hank by boldly talking back. “Mr. Daniels, good buddy, the Lord Jesus is my Savior, and I like to tell all the folks about him.” Those words left Hank speechless.

Two days later Hank hired a young boy to take Wally’s job. To ease his conscience, Hank paid Wally more than the minimum wage he had promised him and instructed him to stay away. The next week, “Where’s Wally? Where’s my good buddy?” were questions heard every day in the restaurant.

“I don’t know; maybe he’s sick,” Blondie casually suggested, not wanting to admit that Wally had been fired.

Later that morning, Blondie handed Hank a napkin left on a table. When Hank examined it, a twenty-dollar bill fell out in his hands. “A little something for Wally” was scrawled on one side.

By the end of the week, the truck drivers had donated nearly \$500 for Wally. Hank couldn’t believe it. Besides, the new busboy wasn’t working out. Thus, for fear the customers might turn on him, Hank asked Wally to come back.

When Wally arrived the following morning, he said, “Mr. Daniels, good buddy, I sure missed seeing you. Have you been getting along all right?”

“I’m glad to see you back,” Blondie said, giving Wally a big hug. No one ever questioned Hank about firing Wally, and Hank hoped no one outside of Blondie would ever find out.

“You’re doing a good job here. I appreciate you, and so do my customers,” Hank said to Wally, humbling himself.

Wally looked at Hank with a grin and said, “Ah, Mr. Daniels, good buddy, all things work to the good for those who love the Lord. Ain’t you learned that yet?”

I guess not, Hank thought, and that night, for the first time in ten years, he read the Bible.

WEEKDAY READINGS

October 26–31

Mon.

Weekday: Romans 8:12–17 / Luke 13:10–17

Thu.

Weekday: Romans 8:31–39 / Luke 13:31–35

Tue.

Weekday: Romans 8:18–25 / Luke 13:18–21

Fri.

Weekday: Romans 9:1–5 / Luke 14:1–6

Wed.

Sts. Simon and Jude: Ephesians 2:19–22 / Luke 6:12–16

Sat.

Weekday: Romans 11:1–2, 11–12, 25–29 / Luke 14:1, 7–11