

Homily for 30th Sunday in Ordinary Time

Since infancy she was blind, deaf and mute. Despite her limitations she had no truck with self-pity. Instead, Helen Keller understood that physical limitations never trumped emotional scarring.

Consider her words on blindness:

“I have walked with people whose eyes are full of light but who see nothing in sea or in sky, nothing in city streets, nothing in books. It were far better to sail forever in the night of blindness with sense and feeling and mind than to be content with the mere act of seeing.”

Powerful words that call us to realize that a lack of sight is not just a physical handicap. It can be much deeper. It is a reality that each of us can be blind to so much in life.

Someone visits a doctor and learns that they have a terminal illness. Suddenly they “see” life in a different way. Sad that we have to wait until a doctor says something before we learn to see in a new way.

I remember a father who came to speak to me when I was working in a high school situation. He wanted to know how his daughter was doing. In the middle of the discussion he just started crying. He told me he had been working two jobs and was forever away from home. Then

one day he came home and his wife and family were gone. This father told me that for the first time he could see that he gave them everything but the one thing they needed – his love, his presence and his caring.

How many relationships slip through our fingers because of our lack of gratitude – and once gone, we see all that they brought to our lives and how much we lack because they are gone.

And on a deeper level we often suffer from moral blindness. This is the blindness that says lying is okay (after all, everybody does it). This is the blindness that says my needs come first. This is the blindness that takes life for granted...whether it is the unborn, the handicapped and disabled or the elderly.

How very much should we be like the blind Bartimeus in today's Gospel who cries out: "Jesus, Son of David, have pity on me!" For Christ is calling us to see with a new vision...a new set of eyes. How much do we need to learn that Christ is the light that illuminates the darkness of our lives in order that we might find our way to each other and to God. Like Bartimeus we need to pray: "Lord, I want to see."