

October 28th, 2018 – 30th Sunday, Ordinary Time

A professor of ministry and spirituality asks her students to take part in a little experiment.

She directs them to look around the classroom and focus on one particular color: for example, take note of everything that is RED. After a few moments, she asks them to **close their eyes** and quietly recall all the red items they see. With their eyes still closed, the professor asks them to name all the BLUE things they had seen. Most often, because they were so focused on the color red, they missed all the blue and any other color.

The professor explains that this is similar to what we focus on in everyday life.

She said, “We focus on the negative and tend to notice all that is going wrong in our world, and we miss God’s grace and presence before us. What we focus on is what we give POWER to! In focusing on the negative we miss God’s grace.”

Perhaps no one noticed Bartimaeus that day. He was always there begging. BUT when Bart heard it was Jesus coming, he cried out: “Jesus, son of David, have pity (mercy) on me.” **Many rebuked** him, but he cried out again.” Jesus stops, and calls him. **Others** encouraged him “to get up.” Bart throws away his one possession and goes to Jesus, who asks of Bart what he asked of James and John in last week’s gospel: “**What do you want me to do for you?**” Answer: “Go your way, your faith has saved you.” Where does Bart go? He follows Jesus on the way. The blind Bart can see, the seeing James and John just didn’t get it.

Jesus stops for Bart – can we stop to those we fail to see? Can we ask the simple question: What do you want me to do for you? With Bart, with the crowd, with the disciples, we are called to RE-FOCUS and see all the colors around us. Too often we focus on the colors of anger, disappointment and cynicism and we are blind to the colors of God: compassion, mercy, forgiveness and peace. Jesus affirms Bart’s vision, to SEE the possibility for God’s transforming hope and re-creating love, to recognize God’s grace in EVERY human being, in EVERY place, at EVERY moment.

Truth be told, we all have blind spots. I like the story of a blind man who confronted a busy intersection that he had to cross. Suddenly, someone took him by the arm and asked, “Would you like some company crossing the street?” And they walked arm in arm safely across. Before the blind man could say thanks the **other** person said, “Thank you. This is a tough street for we blind people to cross.”

Jesus doesn’t tell Bart to follow him. He doesn’t have to tell him. Bartimaeus follows him. No doubt he’s a disciple. What can Jesus do for us? Just about everything if we follow. Most of all he can help us to be color blind to all whom we encounter on the way of our lives. Think about that: God is good...all the time. Let us join hands with God’s son as we cross the busy intersections of our lives.