

Fellow Rosarians,

In the Gospel according to St. Matthew we are told how two blind men followed our Lord crying “Jesus son of David have mercy on us” (Mt.9.27).

It would be impossible to deny that the lot of a blind person is an unhappy one. Many are able to come to terms with the condition of blindness. However others who have become blind during their adult life find the search for acceptance a difficult one and do cry out in their misery. The two blind men in scripture did not cry out in vain for our merciful Lord did not abandon these men in their unfortunate state but cured them.

The unhappiness of physical blindness, however, is nothing when compared to the hardship of spiritual blindness which is disastrous both for the body and the soul. For the body because such blindness can only lead to sin and for the soul because such sin prevents our salvation. The first sign of spiritual blindness, as the Fathers of the Church have taught, is dissipation, negligence towards our spiritual state: following the lustful desires of the heart, giving way to passions and vices, man loses self control and the ability to see his own fall from grace. Spiritual blindness prevents him from noticing his sins and he rejects appeals to correction. The principal sign of spiritual blindness is pride.

St. Ephraem the Syrian tells us that pride is dangerous in all manifestations. Every infirmity with care may be healed, but the sickness of pride rejects curative treatment and poisons the soul with venom.

The Church of God has always taught that spiritual blindness is healed by prayer, by sincere repentance, by a desire not to sin. Our true repentance is shown as we kneel and confess our sins to Almighty God and from the priest receive the assurance of forgiveness. The promise of our Lord to his apostles “Whosoever sins you forgive they are forgiven them” that charge which those apostles gave to their successors and which they gave and which has passed down through the Church as part of the gift of Apostolic Succession.

A monk of the Abbey of Maradsous asked Abbot Dom Columba Marmion: “Father what does it mean to repent of sin?” Dom Columba thought for a second and replied “It means a true resolve not to commit further sin.”

Sincere repentance consists above all in sorrow and in fact suffering the sorrow because we know the evil we have done, the suffering we have caused to others and above all the suffering we have caused to our Blessed Lord.

“Only heartfelt sorrow can heal the illness of our soul” said that great saint and Doctor of the Church St Therese of Lisieux. In the teaching and life of our Lord we see as in a mirror our own true state. “Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin” (Jn.8.34). We must, therefore, endeavour with our whole soul to be free of sin, firmly believing that our Lord desires to heal us.

We must be like those blind men and call continually to our Lord: “Jesus son of David have mercy upon us”. If we do this our Lord will show us the same mercy that he showed to them and will cure us of the spiritual blindness that afflicts us. He will open our eyes to the glory of the eternal truth that dwells in light eternal. Let us pray that we may realise the depths of our sinfulness and that offering true repentance the Lord Jesus will restore our souls that we may go forward, and that knowing truth and love that we may inherit eternal life.

May our blessed Lord and Saviour keep you in his loving care and our Lady of the Rosary give you her protection

Father Dominic

O God of mercy, hear our prayer,  
For we are bowed in shame  
To own our sin before your love  
And beg in Jesus' name

That you would heal what sin has pierced  
With sword of bitter grief  
Our shrivelled hearts, our darkened souls:  
Send us, O God, relief!

Pour forth your Spirit from the side  
Of Christ upon the cross  
And wash the wounds of sin away,  
For which he chose the loss

Of all that human hearts hold dear  
Because he loved us more  
Than ever human heart had loved:  
Praise God, forevermore!