

8th Sunday in Ordinary Time by Father Dave

Things are never quite as they appear!

A Woman was flying from Seattle to San Francisco. Unexpectedly, the plane was diverted to Sacramento along the way. The flight attendant explained that there would be a delay, and if the passengers wanted to get off the aircraft the plane would re-board in 50 minutes --- Everybody got off the plane except one lady who was blind. A man had noticed her as he walked by and could tell that the lady was blind because her guide dog lay quietly underneath the seats in front of her throughout the entire flight. He could also tell that she had flown this very flight before because the pilot approached her, and calling her by name, said: "Kathy, we are in Sacramento for almost an hour, would you like to get off and stretch your legs?" The blind lady said: "No thanks, but maybe Buddy would like to stretch his legs." All the people in the gate area came to a complete stand still when they looked up and saw the pilot walk off the plane with a guide dog for the blind! Even worse, the pilot was wearing sunglasses! People scattered. They not only tried to change planes, but they were trying to change airlines!

The Sacred Scriptures remind us of our responsibility as parents and teachers, and – for persons in all sorts of leadership. Today's readings focus on our way of communicating with one another. Even though Jesus is addressing His own disciples, he is looking ahead to the day when these disciples will be teachers, some apostles, and some preachers of the word. The Book of Sirach is one that we do not hear from very often. Sirach was a headmaster of a Jerusalem school for training future leaders.

One of the misfortunes that parents experience is that they normally do not see at once the good (or bad) results of their efforts in rearing and instructing their kids. Teachers face a similar dilemma. It may be years before all the work in educating these young people begins to produce any fruit. They need the encouragement of Sirach and Luke in today's Readings: wait and give the tree time to bear fruit which ripens and matures. While writing to the Corinthians, Paul says that we must wait till eternity for the full manifestation of the good fruit. I guess we could say that perseverance and responsibility are the two main themes in this Sunday's Biblical selections: perseverance on the part of the student – and in this case we could all be considered students under Jesus' watchful care; and from time to time each of us has the responsibility of being a teacher to others – as we hand on the FAITH either by teaching, or by example.

Since a teacher cannot lead their students beyond what he, or she, has been taught and learned they must learn from the best teacher and then continue to learn Scripture from all available sources, the best source being the Holy Spirit. Then the learner or student must apply what they have learned to their own life before trying to teach others. Our goal in the Christian life must be to become like our teacher, Jesus, in our thoughts, our words, and in our actions.

One of the difficulties we all face in trying to hear the voice of God speaking to us is the many distractions that fill our days. There's a story told of a teacher of a high school youth group ministry who tried an ingenious way to get today's Gospel across to the kids. Asking for two volunteers the

teacher blindfolded them and then asked them to step onto a stage that was less than a foot off the ground. Two small water squirt guns were placed on the floor somewhere between them. Their goal was to find the water guns. Their peers were divided into two teams who attempted to verbally cheer-on as well as help find the water guns. Whoever found the water gun first would be the winner, and the loser received a good dose of water. Afterward the teacher asked them about their experience. "It was very difficult to hear the directions because everyone was shouting." They said. "I couldn't pick out the right voice to listen to." After all, half of the directions shouted in the room were intended for the other student. Kind of sums up the difficulty in trying to hear the voice of Jesus in our daily lives.

Jesus reminds us so often it is for us to not only recognize the voice of the Shepherd, but to trust the Shepherd's voice in guiding us to safety (as Psalm 23 reminds us).

Jesus makes another point of judging without the facts. He refers to this as the beam and the speck in one's eye. Schoolteacher Dodie Gadiant decided to travel across America and see the sights she had taught her students about, for the last 13 yrs. Traveling alone in a truck with a camper in tow, she launched out. One afternoon rounding a curve on I-5 near Sacramento in rush-hour traffic, the water pump blew on her truck. She was tired, exasperated, scared and alone. In spite of the traffic jam she caused, no one seemed interested in helping. Leaning up against the trailer she prayed, "Please Lord send me an angel, preferably one with mechanical experience!" Within 4 minutes a huge Harley drove up ridden by an enormous man sporting long black hair, a beard and tattooed arms. With an incredible air of confidence, he jumped off and without even glancing at Dodie went to work on the truck. Within another few minutes, he flagged down a larger truck, attached a tow chain to the frame of the disabled Chevy and whisked the whole 56-ft rig off the freeway onto a side street where he calmly continued to work on the water pump. The intimidated, schoolteacher was too dumbfounded to talk. Especially when she read the paralyzing words on the back of his leather jacket: Hell's Angels. As he finished the task, she finally got up the courage to say, "Thank you." Noticing her amazement at the whole ordeal, he looked her straight in the eye and said, "Don't judge a book by its cover!" With that he smiled, closed the hood of the truck and straddled his Harley. With a wave he was gone as fast as he had appeared.

Let us pray for the Conversion of the World
& for Peace

Lenten Regulations

This week the Church begins the Penitential Season of Lent. Lent is the penitential season of the Church's Liturgical Calendar, beginning on Ash Wednesday and ending with the Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday. Traditionally the Lenten Season is a time of penance throughout the Universal Church. Lent is also a season during which prayer, the reception of the sacraments, charity and almsgiving are emphasized. Fast and abstinence are to be observed on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. All the Fridays of Lent are days of abstinence from meat. On the weekdays of Lent, there is no obligation to fast. However, voluntary acts of self-denial are encouraged, regardless how young or old one may be. Ash Wednesday and Good Friday are days of Fast, and Abstinence from meat. Limit of one full meal on these days for all between the ages of 18 and 59 (provided one is in good health and not advised otherwise by one's physician). And even though one may not have reached their 18th birthday yet, there is no reason why the youngster can't begin practicing Fast and Abstinence. All who have reached their 14th year are bound to abstain totally from meat (and again, even if younger, the practice can begin with the younger members of the family).

REGARDING THE EASTER DUTY – The Sacraments of Reconciliation and Holy Communion are to be received during the Easter Season. Please try to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation as soon as possible, and as often as possible. Please watch the Parish Bulletins for information regarding extra opportunities for the Sacrament.

A wonderful request was made for a special well dressed young lady who is independent and delights in conversation. This wonderful lady will celebrate her 100th Birthday on March 6. Her family would love for her to receive 100 cards in celebration of this special milestone.

Cards can be mailed to:

**Normajeanne Bevens
2216 Sassafras Street
Apartment 30
Erie, Pa 16502**

**BULLETIN REFLECTION by Father Rody
FEB 27 2022, 8TH SUN YR C...LK 6, 39-45**

39 And he told them a parable, "Can a blind person guide a blind person? Will not both fall into a pit?"

Will good intention be sufficient enough to say, I am willing to help you? To start with, we read first...

James 2, 14 What good is it, my brothers, if someone says **he has faith but does not have works?** Can that faith save him? **15 If a brother or sister has nothing to wear and has no food for the day, 16** and one of you says to them, **"Go in peace, keep warm, and eat well," but you do not give them the necessities of the body, what good is it?**

In connection with the letter of St. James is the saying, **'You cannot give what you do not have.'** Thus, a blind man may have a good intention to lead another blind man **but due to that thing that he does not have**, he cannot do so. Intention, then, should be coupled with the corresponding capacity/ability that would lead us for the completion of thing.

How are we to interpret the term **'blind'**? 1. It is the **literal** absence of sense of sight, and 2. It could also mean **(in wider sense)** the deprivation of a needed thing to respond accordingly to a particular intention. **It is an OBSTRUCTION.**

We start with **the government** (legal term)... **'Ignorantia juris non excusat=Ignorance of the law excuses nobody.'**

The church...St. Jerome, **'Ignorance of the scripture is ignorance of Christ.'**

In the two different worlds we belong to, these are the kinds of blindness that each one of us may have and such may have hindered the complete realization of things. Things that would really help us get through the other side of life.

Our teachers asked us always (school days), 'have you read your assignments?' And we all answered, 'yes.' Then recitation starts, here you are---head down and could not look eye to eye to your teacher...why, it is because you only read the assignment but did not really understand it. Same true with our bible, 'oh father I have been reading the bible since childhood...really...if so, why is it your concept of mass is limited to 30-40 minutes?' **MT 26, 39** He advanced a little and **fell prostrate in prayer**, saying, "My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me; yet, not as I will, but as you will." **40** When he returned to his disciples he found them asleep. He said to Peter, **"So you could not keep watch with me for one hour? 41** Watch and pray that you may not undergo the test. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak."

Ignorance/inadequate knowledge (**mankind's pit**) has blinded us to reach the level of correct understanding of the Word of God, live out a true faith and even to the point of corroding us on the ideals of our faith... In this situation, where are we now...who would lead us...are you willing to be led?