

# **BARTIMARUS - THE BLIND MAN.**

## **An Event on Human Blindness** (Mk 10:46-52)

### **Intent of this Exercise:**

- ✓ *To realize that all of us are to a large extent "blind"*
- ✓ *To grow in faith in the healing power of Jesus:*

### **Uses of this Exercise**

- ✓ *Bible study sessions.*
- ✓ *Personal prayer.*
- ✓ *Healing sessions.*
- ✓ *Penitential services.*

## **1 Introductory Session**

Singing of hymns and/or bhajans.  
Opening prayer.

## **2 The Word of God.** (Mk 10: 46-52)

You may request the participants to read the passage very slowly in a meditative mood.

## **3. Homily Input.** Suggested Thoughts

### **(1) Bartimaeus' Case**

Bartimaeus was a blind man. He could not see, yet he recovered his eyesight.

How did that miracle take place?

There was a four step process in his healing.

- 1<sup>st</sup>. Bartimaeus was aware that he was blind.
- 2<sup>nd</sup>. Bartimaeus wanted with all his heart to be healed of his blindness.
- 3<sup>rd</sup>. Bartimaeus believed implicitly in the healing power of Jesus.
- 4<sup>th</sup>. Bartimaeus earnestly prayed to Jesus for healing.

### **(2) Our case:**

- 1<sup>st</sup>. It is a fact that all of us, in one way or other, are "blind" Yet, most of us are not aware of our blindness
- 2<sup>ns</sup>. Consequently, we do not have a wish to be healed.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> We may not have a strong faith in the healing power of Jesus
- 4<sup>th</sup>. So, we do not pray in earnest to Jesus for healing..

### **(3) There "blind spots" areas of our life where we lack clear vision.** **They can be grouped into four chapters.**

Chapter one: Blindness towards others:

We are blind and wear blinkers in our perception of others.

Due to prejudices and biases, we have distorted images of others, both as individuals and as groups or communities.

We cannot see their good points.

We exaggerate their faults and generalize them.

We brand them, we label them, reject them, despise them, etc...

Chapter two: blindness towards self:

We are blind to ourselves in the way we see ourselves.

We cannot see our good: qualities:

We have poor and distorted self-images

We do not like ourselves.

We reject ourselves.

We feel insecure, worrisome, etc.

Chapter three: Moral blindness:

We are blind to moral values and judgments.

Not able to distinguish between good and evil,

We are blind to our goodness, strengths and virtues.

We are blind to our weaknesses, sins and failures.

Chapter four: Spiritual blindness:

We may have wrong perception of God, distorted images of God.

In our relationship with him, our prayer life is poor.

We may entertain fear of God, of his "justice" and "punishments".

We might harbor lurking resentments against God.

We lack faith, hope and love towards Him, etc.

**(4) The greatest causes of our blindness are:**

First; Attachments like greed, lust, pride laziness, etc.

Second: Negative feelings, like anger, hatred, fear, revengefulness, guilt, etc.

Third: Inborn prejudices due to our affiliations like caste, language, social class, religion. Etc.

**(5) Requirements to be healed of our blindness?**

1st Honestly and courageously we have to accept the fact that in many areas of our life we are blind even if we are not conscious of it.

*Note: We humans are prone to be blind to our blindness. This unfortunate tendency renders us "incurable!"*

*Occasionally, though we may have a "hunch" about our blindness, we do not bother to examine what's wrong with us.*

*Actually, we are afraid of healing. Unconsciously, we do not wish to be healed because of a "lurking" fear that if we are healed we shall have to make drastic changes in our life, a*

*thing we are not prepared for.. For instance, if I come to see that my enemy is a good man, I'll have to forgive him! or, if I clearly see that all men have the same rights that I have before God and society, I'll have to give up many of my privileges.*

2<sup>nd</sup> A strong longing for healing. Like Bartimaeus we have to keep telling ourselves "I want to see!" "I want to see."

3<sup>rd</sup> An implicit faith in the healing power of Jesus. Like Bartimaeus, we have to tell; "Jesus, heal me"!

4<sup>th</sup> An honest and continuous prayer to Jesus "Jesus, that I may see" "Jesus. I want to see!"

#### **4. An Honest Search or Introspection**

- Place yourself in the presence of God.
- Spend some time in silent prayer
- In all honesty and sincerity question yourself on the four chapters of blindness affecting us mentioned above.
- You may take some jottings on your reflections.

#### **Self-questioning:**

##### **Am I affected by:**

- **Attachments** like greed, lust, pride laziness, etc.?
- **Negative feelings**, like anger, hatred, fear, revengefulness, guilt, etc.?
- **Inborn prejudices** due to our affiliations like caste, language, social class, religion. .

##### **That blind me in the way I see others?**

Can I see their good points and qualities?

Do I exaggerate their faults or generalize them?

Do I brand them, label them, reject them, despise them, etc..? .

##### **That blind me in the way I see myself?**

Do I have a poor or distorted self-image?

Can I see my qualities, my strengths and my goodness and be happy about them?

Do I sincerely like the person I am? or do I reject yourself?

##### **That blind me to see my moral goodness or sinfulness?**

Can I own up my sins? Do I excuse them or rationalize them?

Can I see and thank God for my moral goodness and virtues?

Do I see clearly the difference between what are my human failings and my malicious actions?

**That blind me in the way I see God?**

Do I have a distorted God-image, sort of a punishing, stern, fearful God?

At prayer, can I relate to God as to an all loving, forgiving and accepting father?

Do I have any resentment or any other negative feelings against God?

Can I entrust myself into God's hands whatever happens to me - pleasant or unpleasant?

## **5. Closing Event Close the day either** **By a Group prayer session, or** **By a Eucharistic Celebration**

**Hints:**

If the group is large, divide it into subgroups of 6 or 8 members each.

**Preparation for the Prayer session and / or Eucharist.**

- Ask the participants to prepare for the Prayer session or for the Eucharist a suitable item based on one or several of the New Testament texts quoted below. All of them are connected with human blindness of one type or other.

N. T. texts on blindness.

Jn 9:1-41	The man born blind.
Mt 23:1-36	Jesus upbraiding the Pharisees because of their blindness.
Mt 12:22-32	Blindness to signs and miracles.
Mt 13:53-58	Jesus rejected at Nazareth.
Mk T.1-23	Teaching of the ancestors.
Lk 12:13-21	The rich fool.
Lk 18:9:14	Pharisee and Tax Collector.

- Possible items or activities could be:  
A commentary on the text, a dramatic replay of the scene, a role-play in modern setting, a radio-play, a mime, or any other item the participants may choose
- Ask also the participants to prepare some prayers asking the Lord to see things properly and give them the courage to act accordingly.

**Prayer session and / or Eucharis.**

- Make good use of appropriate hymns.
- Encourage spontaneous prayers.
- After they have gone through their presentations, stir their faith in the healing power of Jesus by commenting on any of the following texts:
 

Mk 5:25:34	The woman with the flow of blood. "If I only can touch the hem of his garment. "My daughter, your faith has made you well."
Mt 8:1-4	"If you want to, you can make me clean."
Mk 9:14-27	"Everything is possible for the one who has faith."