



The Reading is from Luke 18:35-43

At that time, as Jesus drew near to Jericho, a blind man was sitting by the roadside begging; and hearing a multitude going by, he inquired what this meant. They told him, "Jesus of Nazareth is passing by." And he cried, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" And those who were in front rebuked him, telling him to be silent; but he cried out all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!"

And Jesus stopped, and commanded him to be brought to him; and when he came near, he asked him, "What do you want me to do for you?" He said, "Lord, let me receive my sight."

And Jesus said to him, "Receive your sight; your faith has made you well." And immediately he received his sight and followed him, glorifying God; and all the people, when they saw it, gave praise to God.

Resurrectional Apolytikon in Plagal of the 4th Tone

When You, the Life of all, from the dead resurrected, * a shining Angel cried to the lamenting women, * "Cease from your tears. Announce unto the Apostles the tidings full of joy. * Cry out in exaltation, that Christ the Lord has arisen from the dead. * For He so willed to save the human race, as God, in His good pleasure."

Seasonal Kontakion in the First Tone

Your birth sanctified a Virgin's womb and properly blessed the hands of Symeon. Having now come and saved us O Christ our God, give peace to Your commonwealth in troubled times and strengthen those in authority, whom You love, as only the loving One.

Discussion

Seeking God is a matter of faith not sight. Seeing is believing? In the Gospel lesson, believing is seeing.

*“To the King of ages, immortal, **invisible**, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.” (1 Timothy 1:17)*

The blind man already sees that Jesus can give him sight before Jesus does anything! Jesus gives to the blind man what the blind man already believes. Jesus doesn't even claim to heal the man, he tells the blind man, “your faith has made you well.”

As St. Paul says, *“for we walk by faith, not by sight”* (2 Corinthians 5:7).

Ask God for what you need.

But you must ask with faith, and part of asking with faith is also, how you react after God gives you what you had asked for. Look at the example of the blind man to teach you this. The Lord, of course, in His omniscience knew that this man would glorify Him. He knew all aspects of his faith: from his belief that He was the Son of God, to his steadfastness in his confession and his persistence in supplication, to his thanksgiving afterward. How do we react?

We've been given the pearl of great price. We forget so often to give thanks to God, remember the lesson of the 10 lepers.

In other words, be like that blind beggar who knew that his only hope was in Jesus Christ. Persist and refuse to give up in prayer for the Lord's mercy, as well as in whatever types of fasting and almsgiving you are able to do at this point your life. Use your weakness in all of these endeavors as food for your humility and get on with the daily life of faith and faithfulness as the Lord strengthens and focuses your spiritual sight as He sees fit. Surely, there is no better way to prepare to behold the glory of our Savior when He is born at Christmas.

Today's passage closes with Jesus saying to the blind man, *“Receive you sight; your faith has made you well”* (v.42). This does not mean much to the 100% of us who can see physically. However, it has great meaning for the 100% of us who are spiritually blind to one degree or another. The antidote is more faith/trust in God, which requires hearing His word/teachings/commandments, which requires listening and understanding. It is difficult to hear if we are always busy and talking. It is difficult to listen and understand if we always insist on our own ideas. It is difficult to have more faith in God if it is always being directed towards something or someone else.

Lord, bless this lesson to our wisdom, understanding and application!