

Sunday Sermon by His Eminence Metropolitan Serafim of the Orthodox Archbishopric of Zimbabwe and Angola (24th January 2021)



Today's Gospel extract refers to the healing of the blind man in the city of Jericho. The element that makes an impression on us is the blind man's certainty that Christ could heal him. Indeed, in the conversation between Christ and the blind man, we see that even though this man was deprived of sight, of his light, this did not hinder him in being correctly informed that Jesus Christ, according to the prophecies of the Old Testament, is the descendant of King David, in other words the expected Messiah, the Son of God, who would save mankind from their illnesses, their debauchery, their pain, from death, to lead them to eternal life, to bring them near to God.

That is why, when the miracle of the healing of the blind man occurs, Christ explicitly tells him "your faith has saved you"; that is, your confidence in the true divinity has healed you.

The matter of our true faithfulness appoints the place that we have in the world. In

other words, according to the degree of our faith, so much more can we see and utilize what is around us. The closer we are to true religion the better we are able to face up to the various problems that grieve our lives. If our faithfulness is right, even though we face the worst problems, we have patience, understanding and the power of God to fight as giants and to conquer and to experience a miracle. If our faith is false and weak, even though we should be faced with small and insignificant problems, most times, we become despondent, we draw away from the Church, we fall into sin and at times we commit crimes.

Faithfulness, then, always affects man's life. They who have correct faith find the strength to do their best for themselves, their families and for society at large. They who don't, conduct themselves with fanaticism, hatred, evil, cause problems for themselves, their families and society at large.

So in every era we see people doing good, as did our Saints and our heroes and generally the benefactors of the world; and at the same time people performing social injustices, becoming violent, brutal, malevolent criminals and exploiters. In the first instance we are dealing with people who believe in God. In the second instance we are dealing with materialistic people who do not believe in the existence of God. They think that all is judged according to what is expedient for themselves, without taking into consideration the issue of justice. This can happen to individuals, to families, to social groups, to political parties, to international organizations, to countries and to coalitions. This creates violence, terrorism, conflict, war and uncertainty for the future.

That is why the only way for peace and progress to exist among men is for true faith in Christ to grow in us, that He is our Saviour God who will lead us to live in love amongst ourselves and by extension to love those people who need our help and whom we are able to help.

The blind man in today's Gospel had this deep faith and this love, with the result that he experienced the biggest miracle of his life, to regain his sight and especially to be eternally saved. We need this faith today too, in order to face our problems correctly. So that we too may have the hope of salvation, the hope of eternal life. The example of the greatness of the blind man's faith in today's Gospel extract should represent for us a luminous compass for the remainder of our lives.

Luke 18:35 – 43

35 Then it happened, as He was coming near Jericho, that a certain blind man sat by the road begging. 36 And hearing a multitude passing by, he asked what it

meant. 37 So they told him that Jesus of Nazareth was passing by. 38 And he cried out, saying, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" 39 Then those who went before warned him that he should be quiet; but he cried out all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!" 40 So Jesus stood still and commanded him to be brought to Him. And when he had come near, He asked him, 41 saying, "What do you want Me to do for you?" He said, "Lord, that I may receive my sight." 42 Then Jesus said to him, "Receive your sight; your faith has made you well." 43 And immediately he received his sight, and followed Him, glorifying God. And all the people, when they saw it, gave praise to God.

— facebook.com/giorgos.iakovou