



Sunday  
October 27<sup>th</sup>, 2024

**Pentecost 23B**

# Pilgrimage towards Heaven

I see, I'm on the road  
again

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**Breaking Open the Word**



**St Peter's by the Lake**  
**PAYNESVILLE**  
Anglican Diocese of Gippsland



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# READINGS

Jeremiah 31.7-9  
Psalm 126  
Hebrews 7.23-28  
Mark 10.46-52



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“

Jesus of Nazareth,  
Son of David,  
have mercy on me.

”

Mark 10

Lord, we beseech thee to  
Keep thy household  
the Church  
in continual godliness:  
that through thy protection it may  
be free from all adversities,  
and devoutly given to serve thee in  
good works,  
to the glory of thy Name:  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

# INTRODUCTION

In the Parish today we will explore the calling of Simon and Jude. This transformative journey depicted in the Gospel of Mark, features the story of Bartimaeus, the blind beggar.

This journey is more than just a sequence of events; it represents a profound faith experience. Based on biblical narratives and philosophical references, Pastor Dennis highlights the significance of Bartimaeus calling Jesus “Son of David,” which reflects recognition of His royal lineage and divine compassion.

This encounter unveils a broader invitation for believers to seek a more profound understanding and connection with God.

Is there something more to the act of Bartimaeus shedding his cloak? Is it a metaphor for casting off one’s past and embracing a new vision.

Jesus’ question to Bartimaeus, “What do you want me to do for you?” is an invitation to faith and redemption. By regaining his sight,

Bartimaeus symbolises the spiritual awakening necessary for all believers to follow Jesus on the difficult path toward Jerusalem and the impending passion.

Ultimately, the message of love over duty, inviting the congregation to recognise their blindness and seek transformation through their relationship with Jesus, thereby completing the tapestry of faith woven throughout the journey.

## Key Reflection Points

What does the story of Bartimaeus teach us about the importance of asking for help when needed?

How does the theme of blindness and sight relate to our understanding of faith?

In the story, Bartimaeus calls Jesus ‘Son of David.’ Why is this significant for understanding who Jesus is?

What can we learn from the call to ‘take heart’ and ‘get up’ in our own journeys of faith?

How does the idea of redemption in this sermon relate to the way we view our mistakes or past choices?

God of Creation, breathe into us, made of clay,  
your gift of life so that we, made in your image  
may be your eyes, ears, hands and voice.



This week's liturgy, which we will mainly follow at Paynesville, is based on the call of Simon and Jude, whose feast day properly occurs on Monday the 28th. We are doing this partly because I want to spend time exploring who God is calling, and secondly, I think it would be a shame to go through this entire process of looking at Mark chapters 8, 9, and 10 without finishing the sequence.

While the Gospel of Mark may seem to start and end with the healing of two blind men, it is more than just a bookend. It is a journey, a transformative experience of faith.

I have facetiously referred to this entire sequence as being summed up with the well-known pop song "On the Road Again"!

This particular section of Mark's Gospel is so much bookmarked, but it is part of a longer journey that leads and points us firmly to what Jesus is about to do.

Professor Dorothy Lee at Trinity College refers to the character Bartimaeus as being a herald of the entry into Jerusalem or, if you like, a very considerate marker looking at the passion of our Lord Jesus Christ.

In this particular study today, I intend to look at this bit by warp and weave to create a tapestry. This tapestry requires us to be people who wonder, seeking to find the extra vision or supervision within this journey. So, let's go through the text together.

We are immediately told what is happening in this passage. Jesus and his disciples come to Jericho. Having been up around the Sea of Galilee and through the territories, Jesus is returning to Jerusalem. There are some overtones in this. Yahoo! or Joshua entered the Holy Land via Jericho. A few people needed to be promoted in our weekly study, which I was able to do by singing the old Negro spiritual "Joshua Fit the Battle of Jericho. This is the entry into the redemption of Israel, but as we heard last week, it is not the military redemption that many were

seeking but rather the redemption of the people who strive with God.

As he and his disciples and a large crowd were leaving Jericho, they were the sons of the blind beggar sitting by the roadside.

Now, I'm immediately curious why Bartimaeus, the son of Times, is repeated. Indeed, his name is given in Hebrew or Aramaic, but it is repeated as a son of Timeus. So the question I immediately have is, who was Timeaeus? In particular, I question it because it is not a Hebrew name.

Now, this may surprise many people, but for me, the only name that comes to mind is from Plato's dialogues. Plato, writing in 326 BCE, had Timeaus Socrates and a few others who looked at the nature of creation and the role of God. I will not get too much into Platonic philosophy, but in the dialogues, Timeaeus concludes that there must be a creator, God or demiurge.

This demiurge creates fire, air, water, and earth; as such, these elements of creation also lead to humanity, which has a soul and perception. Timeaeus is the one who gains insight into the reality that God, creation, humanity, and all existence are related. I don't see this as a coincidence; I see this as deliberate, and the titles that follow Bartimaeus, the philosopher or the son of that tradition, parallel the names he applies to Jesus.

And so, while we continued when Bartimeaus heard it was Jesus of Nazareth, he shouted and said, "Jesus, son of David, have mercy on me."

Let's look at that addressing of Jesus. Jesus of Nazareth. The prophecy says that he will be reckoned as a Nazarene. In other places, he was Galilean. Jesus, Yahoo! The one who saves is from Nazareth. He identifies Jesus in terms of his royal lineage. Once again, prophecy plays a part in this—Son of David. Born from the house of David, known as a Galilean, will come the one who saves the





world. We told many Stanley ordered him to keep quiet, but even then, he cried out loud, "Son of David, have mercy on me." He is asking for compassion – compassion is about to become a very much part of the story.

What follows next is Jesus saying, "Call him here." And they called to the blind man, saying, "Take heart, or if you like, have courage, get up; he is calling you now." There seems to be a sense of invitation here: take heart, be bold, have good courage, arise, get up again," as a sense of a day word that we now associate with the resurrection. "Get up, be alert, and he is calling you." This is not just a command; this is an invitation.

We get to this next strange thing: nakedness before Jesus is going to become a theme when we think of the young man in the garden. Throwing off his cloak, the mantle of a poor man and beggar, he comes to Jesus. For the second time in the 10th chapter of

Mark, we hear, "What do you want me to do for you?" This question was asked by Jesus to James and John when they asked if they could say that he's left and right hand when he comes into glory.

Again, if that is the cross, that suspicion of Jesus coming into glory is to be on the right and one on the left to be baptised into the baptism of Jesus. Then what is said is also significant because the next time we hear this phrase, it will be in John's gospel when

Mary Magdalene realises that Jesus is not the gardener. Rabbouni, Let me see again." This is interesting because he has obviously had sight before, and now, through insight, he is calling out to the teacher. It's more than the rabbi; it is more than the son of David. It is an acknowledgement of who Jesus is. This relationship is intimate.



I have wondered if this is, again, the same blind man from 8.22. Had this man gone through and lost sight of what he was supposed to be doing, now, once again, he has regained the ability to see what Jesus is saying. What follows is exceptional. Jesus said to him, "Go. Be gone from here. Be on your way; our faith has made you whole." Many translations are accurate but need to capture what's there entirely. The Greek is based on the word "soter" and has overtones of redemption. If we remember the preceding passage to this story, Jesus came to be a ransom for many. To pay a ransom is to redeem. To redeem is to grant wholeness beyond our understanding.

Immediately, he regained his sight and followed him on the way. Where is this way just? This path leads to Jerusalem. The place where Jesus will be arrested, spat on, tried, and abused, and then placed on a tree and left to die. This is the heart of the passion.

So we arrive at the end of this exciting journey in which we have gone to the north around the Gentile area from one side of the lake to another, encountering people on their journey of faith, with disciples who just don't get it, to people with ambition. We encounter a wealthy young man who realises that while he has kept all the commandments, his wealth will not get him into heaven alone. He has to be able to empty himself to see Jesus's vision. The one who sees the vision more than any is a man called a son, according to the tradition of Timeaus, who realises that the creator and father of all things is the same person as Jesus of Nazareth, son of David. Through all the combined elements, this one person can show him compassion and help him regain full sight to follow Jesus on the way.

No wonder Dorothy Lee calls him the Herald Harold of the Passion or the Herald into the entry of Jerusalem. The stage is set, the lot has been cast, and Jesus is about to do what we humans could not do for ourselves. And this is not Jesus taking the form of God or being impaired by God; this is our incarnate God who has risked everything out of love.

It is out of love, not out of duty, not out of any sense of guilt, but rather out of an unending love which surpasses all understanding that God did this.

We are also blind beggars along the way. We, too, must cast off the mantle of our past and bare our souls, going with Jesus on the way to redemption.

And this is the tapestry I see completed through His walk and weave as we enter Jerusalem.





# GROUP DISCUSSION

## Question 1

**What does the story of Bartimaeus teach us about the importance of asking for help when needed?**

Bartimaeus shouts to Jesus for mercy, even when others try to silence him. This shows his determination to seek help despite the challenges.

In your own life, can you think of a time when you needed help but felt discouraged or afraid to ask? How did you handle that situation?

## Question 2

**How does the theme of blindness and sight relate to our understanding of faith?**

The sermon discusses how Bartimaeus regains his physical and spiritual sight, implying that true vision comes from faith in Jesus.

Have you ever experienced a moment where you felt blind to the truth or guidance in a situation? How did you find clarity?

## Question 3

**In the sermon, Bartimaeus calls Jesus the 'Son of David.' Why is this significant for understanding who Jesus is?**

This title highlights Jesus' royal lineage and fulfilment of prophecy, indicating Bartimaeus recognises Jesus' importance.

What names or titles do you use when you think of or pray to Jesus? How do those names shape your understanding of Him?

## Question 4

### What can we learn from the call to 'take heart' and 'get up' in our faith journeys?



When Jesus calls Bartimaeus, he is encouraged to take courage and arise, which parallels our need for faith encouragement.

Can you share a personal experience where encouragement changed your outlook or motivated you to take action in your faith journey?

## Question 5

### How does the idea of redemption in this sermon relate to how we view our mistakes or past choices?

The sermon emphasises that Jesus came to redeem and grant wholeness, suggesting that our past does not define our future.

Could you reflect on a mistake you've made in the past?

How can the concept of redemption help you to move forward and become a better version of yourself?

## End notes and further reading

Andrew's Version

[https://open.substack.com/pub/abmcg/p/the-sights-and-sounds-of-bartimaeus?r=3zdc09&utm\\_campaign=post&utm\\_medium=web](https://open.substack.com/pub/abmcg/p/the-sights-and-sounds-of-bartimaeus?r=3zdc09&utm_campaign=post&utm_medium=web)

Sacra Pagina

VOLUME 2: THE GOSPEL OF MARK,

Donahue, Harrington SJ Liturgic Press, 2002

Proper 24 in Lectionary Reflections – Year B by Jane Williams



Brabarlung Totem  
This is produced on  
Gunaikurnai Land, and our  
respects are paid to the First  
Nations people everywhere.



# Walking the Talk

This five-day devotional will deepen the sermon from this weekend. Together, we will explore the themes of redemption, faith, and the transformational journey through the lens of the Gospel of Mark, focusing on Bartimaeus's call as a reflection of our own spiritual paths.

## Day 1 Mark 10:46-52

On this first day, we delve into the core theme of recognition. Bartimaeus, the blind beggar, hears that Jesus is passing by and boldly cries out for mercy. His plea calls for physical healing and acknowledging Jesus' divine authority as the Son of David. This moment invites us to reflect on how we recognise Jesus. Are we, like Bartimaeus, willing to cry out for help amidst the crowd, or do we often remain silent due to fear or shame?

Please examine how the Holy Spirit prompts you to seek Jesus' mercy today. Each of us is a beggar in different aspects of our lives, longing for sight and understanding. As Bartimaeus threw off his cloak, let us also shed the hindrances that keep us from approaching Jesus. This day serves as an invitation to unmask our vulnerabilities and seek the compassionate touch of Christ.

What areas of my life do I need to cry out to Jesus for mercy?  
How can I cultivate a spirit of boldness and humility in my faith journey?  
In what ways has God shown compassion to me, and how can I reflect that to others?  
Pray for the courage to approach Jesus with your needs today.  
Reflect on ways to be more aware of Jesus' presence daily.

## Day 2 Mark 10:51-52

As we move into Day 2, we focus on the transformative power of faith. Jesus asks Bartimaeus, "What do you want me to do for you?" This question is profound, inviting a personal response. What are we honestly longing for? Bartimaeus responds with clarity: "Rabboni, let me see again." His faith is not just in a physical restoration but in a relational restoration with Jesus, recognising Him as a Teacher and guiding light.

Today, let's contemplate the areas of our lives that need restoration. What can we learn from Bartimaeus about vocalising our desires to God? Our prayers should reflect not just requests for healing but a deep yearning for relationship and understanding. When we bring our needs before Jesus, we open ourselves to the possibility of wholeness in every aspect of our lives.

What specific areas of my life do I need to bring before Jesus for restoration?  
How can I better articulate my needs and desires in my prayers?  
How can I foster a deeper relationship with Jesus as my Teacher?  
Pray for clarity in understanding your own needs and desires.  
Reflect on how to pursue a deeper relationship with Jesus through daily prayer.

## Day 3 Mark 10:47-48

On Day 3, we examine the theme of perseverance in faith. Bartimaeus faced the crowd's attempts to silence him, yet he continued to shout out for Jesus. His determination to seek Jesus is a powerful reminder of the pressures we face from the world. Often, our faith can be challenged by those around us who may not understand our connection to God.

This day encourages us to remember that true faith perseveres amidst opposition. Bartimaeus's tenacity illustrates the importance of staying true to our cries for help and guidance. Let's reflect on how we can remain steadfast and unapologetic in our faith journeys, regardless of external pressures. Like Bartimaeus, let us refuse to let anything or anyone hinder our pursuit of Christ's mercy.

What external pressures challenge my faith today?



How can I remain steadfast in my pursuit of Jesus amidst those pressures?  
What role does community play in supporting my faith journey?  
Pray for strength to persevere in faith, especially when faced with opposition.  
Consider extending support to others who are struggling in their faith journeys.

#### Day 4 Mark 10:49-50

Day 4 revolves around the invitation we receive from Jesus. When Jesus calls Bartimaeus to come, he responds by throwing aside his cloak and coming to Him. This act symbolises readiness to respond to Jesus' call and shedding of his past identity as a blind beggar. It challenges us to consider what we must let go of to embrace God's calling fully.

This day prompts reflection on our responses to Jesus' call. Are we willing to discard the things that weigh us down and prevent us from following Jesus? Consider what clings to us—fear, doubt, or past failures—that hinders our journey. As we learn from Bartimaeus, true discipleship requires action and an openness to transformation. Let us be ready to respond when Jesus invites us closer.

What are the things I need to release to follow Jesus more closely?  
How do I typically respond to Jesus' invitations in my life?  
What steps can I take to show my readiness to follow Jesus?  
Pray for guidance in recognising and shedding the burdens that hold you back.  
Reflect on Jesus' call in your life and what it means for your future.

#### Day 5 Mark 10:52

As we conclude this five-day journey, Day 5 brings us to the culmination of Bartimaeus's encounter with Jesus. After his sight is restored, he follows Jesus on the way. This action demonstrates the full circle of faith—recognition, restoration, and response. Our faith is ongoing, and each step we take with Jesus leads us closer to his purpose for our lives.

Today, let us consider our paths of discipleship. Following Jesus on the way requires commitment and trust as we navigate our spiritual journeys. Bartimaeus's story reminds us of our call to action—after restoration, we must actively follow Christ and share His light with others. Reflect on how to continue this faith journey and invite others to join you.

What steps can I take today to follow Jesus more closely?  
How can I share my story of faith with others in my community?  
What next step is Jesus inviting me to take in my journey?  
Pray for the courage to continue following Jesus, even when the path is challenging.  
I'd like you to reflect on how you can encourage others in their faith journeys this week.

Prepared by Rev'd Dennis Webster, Rector of the Anglican Parish of Paynesville, Diocese of Gippsland for personal or small group use.

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