# LSW

children

*have things that we would like to ask Jesus for.*Year B

### Thirtieth Ordinary Sunday

**Images**

Helplessness of a blind man

**Points to note**

Here is another vivid story told by Mark. This is one of the few stories that centres so much on the person who was healed instead of on Jesus. Much has been said about the response of Bartimaeus on hearing that Jesus was to come into Jericho.

It may therefore be an idea to centre the session around Bartimaeus. For starters, a variant of the game of blind man’s buff could be fun, especially for the younger ones: Get a volunteer, preferably one who is not told what will happen next. Have him or her blindfolded. Turn the volunteer round several times to disorientate him or her. Rearrange the room to place as many obstacles as possible. Then, the volunteer is to make his or her own way to the door. No one is allowed to give instructions. Watch the fun. Try it again a second time. This time, the other children are, then, to guide the volunteer to the door or some other object.

The point of this little game is to bring out the idea of helplessness and the availability of some one to help and guide. This will link up with the idea of being poor in the spirit and being totally reliant on God. This is the situation that God wants us to be in, and this is the situation that Bartimaeus was in. God is a little bit of a jealous kind. He wants us to be like a new-born babe and to be the only one we can turn to in our helplessness.

**Liturgy**

Acclamation before the Gospel

Alleluia! Alleluia!

I am the light of the world, says the Lord,

anyone who follows me will have the light of life.

Alleluia!

Gospel

A Reading from the Holy Gospel according to St Mark

(Mk 10: 46-52)

As Jesus left Jericho with his disciples and a large crowd, Bartimaeus (that is, the son of Timaeus), a blind beggar, was sitting by the side of the road. When he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to shout and to say, “Son of David, Jesus, have pity on me.” And many of them scolded him. And told him to keep quiet, but he only shouted all the louder, “Son of David, have pity on me” Jesus stopped and said, “Call him here.” So they called the blind man. “Courage,” they said, “get up; he is calling you.” So throwing off his cloak, he jumped up and went to Jesus. Then Jesus spoke, “What do you want me to do for you?” “Master,” the blind man said to him, “let me see again.” Jesus said to him, “Go; your faith has saved you.” And immediately his sight returned and he followed him along the road.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**Discussion**

(Assuming that you have played the game above) *Get the volunteer to describe how he or she feels about volunteering or being volunteered. What did the other children feel about this one child volunteering/being volunteered?*

*Get the volunteer to describe how he or she feels when blindfolded, and then turned around several times, had the room rearranged and then told to make his or her way to the door? Was it easy to find the door the first time? Was it frustrating? How did the other children feel when they could see him or her heading the wrong way but could not give any guidance? What about the second time? How did the volunteer feel about getting all these guidance? Was it easier? What did the others feel?*

*Explain that the whole idea of this little game is to show what is meant by being poor in the spirit. Being poor in the spirit, as the Beatitudes had wanted us to be, means that we are so totally helpless that we have no one to rely on. When we are poor in the spirit, we therefore have to rely on no one but God and God alone.*

*(If you did not play the game, take the children through the scene from Bartimaeus’ point of view: the dust in the hot sun, the noise, the crowds, lots of movement)*

*Back to Bartimaeus: put ourselves in his shoes, if he had any, that is. Discus how helpless he was in his blindness. Discuss how he felt when he heard that Jesus the master healer was coming to town. He decided that he would ask Jesus to heal him. Discuss what else he could have done instead: he could have felt that his problem wasn’t big enough to bother Jesus with. He could have felt that he wasn’t important enough to get Jesus’ attention. He could have felt that there are others who may also need to ask Jesus. He could have felt embarrassed to ask Jesus in front of so many people. He could have felt that other people may not like him to cause a commotion in public.*

*But Bartimaeus did not do any of these things and he was healed. Discuss how Bartimaeus must have felt after he was healed. Parallel all these discussions with how the volunteer in the earlier game felt.*

*Discuss how we should be praying to God in our nightly prayers tonight. How could we be poor in the spirit like Bartimaeus and yet, persistent like he was? Surely we must*