

30<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time, 24 October 2021

Scriptures: Jeremiah 31:7-9; Hebrews 5:1-6; Mark 10:46-52

Homily: Fr. Ken

Whenever there occurs a huge gathering of thousands of people, for a sports game or a rock concert or other event, and you are there or you are watching on TV, there is one thing that you can be certain: that each and every person is known and loved by God. Our God can hold all those people in mind and heart with no effort at all. And God longs for each individual to turn to the one who created them, to belong to the people God has formed to bring them home to heaven. Without any compulsion, God's heart goes out to each and every one of these people.

Statistically, it is probable that many people—if you asked them—would say: "I'm not religious". They may think that God is an outmoded idea, and simply does not exist. Or, that if God does exist, it is without the slightest concern for people on this Planet Earth.

If only they knew. If only they knew the tenderness of God, our Creator, for each and every one of them. If only they knew the story of Jesus weeping over his city and crying aloud: "Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often have I longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings".

If only they knew how close the Holy Spirit is, with the power to open their lives to a glorious new reality. But God will always respect their free will and their freedom to choose.

In Mark's Gospel, Jesus does not force the gift of sight on the blind man Bartimaeus. He responds to the call, "Son of David, have pity on me". He asks: "What do you want me to do for you?" He answers an appeal.

In the first reading, Jeremiah says: "The Lord has saved the people...Behold I will bring them back...and gather them from the far ends of the earth, with the blind and the lame in their midst, they shall return as a great crowd".

That is God's plan, "full of kind-heartedness". Jeremiah continues: "I will comfort them as I lead them back; I will guide them to streams of water, by a smooth path where they will not stumble".

As believing Christians, then, our role is to pray constantly for the people among whom we live, that God will give them the gift of faith. There is no limit to what the Holy Spirit can do.

So, let us reach out to others with the love of Jesus, and let everyone know that all are welcome. Let us do it with hope and with trust. The hope and trust will be there if we keep our eyes fixed on God, as we reach out to all those who do not yet know God, sharing with them our very own experience of God's love.

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