

28 May 2026 -- Thursday of the 8th ordinary week

[Mark 10, 46-52](#)

### Homily

Jericho was an important city that the Galileans had to pass through on their way up to Jerusalem, when they came through the Jordan Valley. This city of palms in the middle of the desert of Judah was, in the Old Testament, the gateway to the Promised Land. Jesus passed through a few times but never stopped there. The Gospels do not mention that he preached or performed any miracles there. In today's Gospel, as Jesus makes his last ascent towards Jerusalem, where he will be put to death, he passes through Jericho, and on the outskirts of the city he passes a blind beggar, who is told that it is Jesus of Nazareth passing by, and who begins to cry out: 'Jesus, son of David, have mercy on me'.

When the people with Jesus wanted to silence the beggar, Jesus stopped. This word is important. While Jesus is constantly on the move to proclaim the good news, and especially as he resolutely climbs towards Jerusalem, the only thing that can stop him in his tracks is the sight of human misery and a plea for mercy. Jesus calls out to this blind man who cries out to him, and asks him the same question he asked James and John in last Sunday's Gospel: 'What do you want me to do for you? The evangelist seems to want to draw a comparison here between the disciples who have been called to follow Jesus and who are still greedy for power and glory ('grant that we may sit, one at your right hand and the other at your left, in your glory') and this poor blind beggar who wants nothing more than to 'see', and who, as soon as he regains his sight, will start following Jesus on the road that leads him to Jerusalem and the Cross, even though Jesus has told him to go away: 'Go, your faith has saved you'.

This story of healing does not have the usual characteristics of 'miracles' or 'signs' performed by Jesus. Rather, the whole story emphasises faith as the basis for following Jesus. As soon as he is brought before Jesus, the blind man no longer calls him 'son of David', but gives him the title of 'master', with the same touch of intimacy as Mary Magdalene on the morning of the resurrection: 'rabbouni'.

Many times, either in our private moments of prayer or in the liturgy, we have prayed the same prayer as this blind man: 'Son of God, have mercy on me', perhaps with the same sense of distance that the use of this messianic title seems to imply. Each time, Jesus stopped and spoke to us. Our prayer then became more intimate and we

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were able, like Bartimaeus and like Mary of Magdala, to call him more intimately rabbouni, 'my teacher'. All that remains is for us to have the courage to follow him to the end on the path he has laid out for us and on which he continues to guide us.

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