

## **30<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time**

*The Eyes of Faith*

We all have times of despair and disillusionment. The death of a loved one or the loss of a job can turn the world around us into darkness. We grope, we fidget, our only friend is the dark gloom, the empty desolation.

Today's readings deal with such crises in the lives of God's people. They speak of a God who pierces the darkness and offers the light of hope. They declare that hope is the ability to see anew.

In the first reading, Jeremiah speaks to the northern tribes who were exiled by the Assyrians. They are only a remnant, but they are not neglected. He encourages them to hope again. God will deliver them: the blind, the lame, the mothers and pregnant woman. He tells them to shout with joy.

The responsorial is a community lament that turns to subsequent joy. Yahweh's recovery of the exiles was so incredible that it seemed like a dream. God's radical change offers the capacity to laugh and rejoice once again. Even the enemy is astonished; "the Lord has done great things for them."

In the Gospel, Mark sees genuine discipleship as the ability to hope for glory in and through suffering. The true disciple sees the exaltation of Jesus in and through his passion and death. Those with such hope must continue to call out like Bartimaeus despite all the obstacles.

Those who wear glasses for the first time realize the sights they had been missing. Traffic signs, reading material, even people come into sharper focus. Our faith is like this. It is the ability to look at depression and despair from a new perspective. God is involved in our problems and is waiting to reach out. Hope sees beyond pain and frustration. It discovers a God who cares. Hope is the capacity to see with opened eyes.