

Singing Our Faith 30th Sunday in Ordinary Time – October 28, 2018

Sunday's gospel reading describes the final moments of Jesus' time outside the walls of Jerusalem. In just a few weeks, he will be betrayed, put on trial, beaten, and crucified. It's ironic that before this sharp turn of events, Mark tells the story of the blind man, Bartimaeus professing Jesus as the Son of David (= Messiah). The blind man sees Jesus for who he really is, yet those with sight are blind to his divinity. It's a parable being played out; it reminds us how we can learn from the outcast and vulnerable of society. And being humbled by that sentiment, we realize that none of us are outcasts in God's eyes.

We learned the hymn "Jesus, Lead the Way" a couple months ago; this Sunday was a good opportunity for me to bring it back.

[Click here to read my last article about this hymn, which mentions the history of the tune and text.](#)

Jesus, Lead the Way



1. Je - sus, lead the way Through our life's long day. When at
2. Je - sus, be our light In the midst of night. Let not
3. When we seek re - lief From a long - felt grief; When temp -
4. Je - sus, still lead on Till our rest be won. If you



times the way is cheer - less, Help us fol - low, calm and
faith - less fears o'er - take us; Let not faith and hope for -
ta - tions come al - lur - ing, Make us pa - tient and en -
lead us through rough plac - es, Grant us your re - deem - ing



fear - less. Guide us by your hand To the prom - ised land.
sake us. May we feel you near As we wor - ship here.
dur - ing. Lord, we seek your grace In this ho - ly place.
grac - es. When our course is o'er, O - pen heav - en's door.

Text: *Jesu, geh voran*; Nicholas L. von Zinzendorf, 1700–1760; tr. by Jane Borthwick, 1813–1897, alt.
Tune: ROCHELLE, 55 88 55; Adam Drese, 1620–1701; harm. alt.

In the first reading, the Prophet Jeremiah speaks of a time when God will gather his people, with the vulnerable amid those being gathered. This is fulfilled in the gospel reading as Jesus prepares to save the human race through his passion, death, and resurrection. The actions of gathering and

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guiding are at the heart of the hymn “Jesus, Lead the Way.” In a special way, stanza 2 draws us into the person of Bartimaeus with Jesus the Light as the conquerer of night (or blindness). Not only that, but the text references “faith,” which is what saved Bartimaeus. I want to highlight a two subtle things that stood out to me from these last moments of the gospel passage.

- “Go your way, your faith has **saved** you.” Bartimaeus wasn’t simply healed of his blindness. His faith saved him. Salvation is a much greater gift than physical healing.
- Jesus tells him to go **his** way, but after that, Mark tells us that Bartimaeus then “followed Jesus on the way.” Bartimaeus could have taken his reward and gone his way, but instead he followed Jesus into Jerusalem where he went to suffer. Like James and John in last Sunday’s gospel, like Peters who professes Jesus as “the Christ,” Bartimaeus really doesn’t know what he’s getting himself into. Each of us is presented with this choice of following **our way** or **The Way** at various times in our life. We need the gift of faith to choose Christ.

There are several afflictions named throughout this hymn - fear, hopelessness, grief, temptation. All of us carry something like this in our hearts as we enter into Mass every weekend. The first reading, the gospel, and “Jesus, Lead the Way” reassure us that God has brought us salvation, he will lead us on the rollercoaster journey of life, and he will gather us to himself in the heavenly city. He is our Way, and we must follow.

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