

Flourish and Flourishing are the key descriptors the Diocese hopes will describe the Anglican Church as the Covid tentacles wither and withdraw.

SO - we are looking for interested people in the congregation to be a part of a small group to propose a Mission Action Plan to Parish Council to aid our flourishing.

These are the three questions

1. Where do you see our faith community flourishing?
2. Which characteristics might our faith community need to work on?
3. What would help our faith community flourish?

If God is giving you a nudge, and you would like to be involved in this, please contact Helen Clarke 0407911413.

I wonder if this weekend's Gospel story might inform our thinking?

Insightful Miracle - A story from a retired priest – Fr Fred - **Bartimaeus.**

There came a time when God decided to walk on earth and to find someone whose wish he would grant.

The angels excitedly watched to see if they would be needed to fulfill that fortunate person's wish (they loved doing that).

And they gossiped among themselves about who would be chosen and so blessed.

Perhaps a king or queen whose wish was to bring justice to all the earth.

Or a great philanthropist who would share wealth's blessings with so many others.

Or maybe, Jesus would ask one of the twelve disciples, holy men, imperfect true, but who would no doubt wish the church's success.

Angels, after all, are not omniscient and, like us, must wait to know God's will.

Jesus was leaving Jericho, and the angels were sure he would not find that man he was seeking. Then suddenly outside that city of tumbled down walls he heard a voice and stopped.

He summoned a noisy blind beggar to come near to him.

And then suddenly Jesus asked *the question*: **"What would you have Me do for you?"**

The angels were astounded, for why ask a beggar what he wants?

It is obvious and well known that they are satisfied with small coins of no real value, breadcrumbs and magic!

The disciples were stung, for even they had not been asked to have a wish fulfilled. But they had been debating such a point, just in case they were asked – and they were vying to sit at the right and left hand of Christ in his glory.

The blind man didn't have to hesitate for even a moment.

He didn't ask for vengeance on all who had walked by ignoring his pathetic poverty and insulting his worthless life to boot.

He didn't ask for the winning lottery ticket to end his life of misery.

He didn't ask for home or wife or comfort.

He didn't even ask for happiness.

Given the chance to ask whatever he wanted from the travelling God, the blind man asked to see.

The angels wondered, reflected, marvelled – was it an opportunity missed or achieved?

Christ granted the one wish of the poor beggar.

A new act of creation, giving the man's eyes what they lacked – the ability to see.



The man experienced what God decreed at the beginning, "Let there be light." Those who could see without the help of Christ were not so impressed at the blessed man's request: for seeing hadn't enabled them to find in life a way to be satiated or satisfied. Eyes cannot help us see what the blind man had seen: the invisible, incomprehensible and ineffable God walking by.

Did the man-now-seeing use his newly given sight to become rich or powerful?

No.

He didn't pursue the things of this earth, but rather a certain blessedness.

The man formerly blind now followed on the way of the servant God who taught unworldly poverty. He worked not for personal gain but to help others see the truth that he had seen

To See 'The Way' – Andrew King

God asked a blind beggar,
What would you have me do for you?
My God! He's blind, he can't see what he needs,
Let alone what would be good for the world.
Why not ask the wise?
Those used to power and choice,
or even me?
We would know given one chance by God
What to ask from the Almighty?
Wealth, health, power, fame, what an opportunity!
The choices are unlimited, the blessings infinite.
One could be quite altruistic:

Peace for the world, food for the hungry?
Immortality for all?
The destruction of mean people?
But only one can we choose,
And one chance to get it right.
I cannot see what is best to ask,
I'm blind as Bartimaeus.
Each wish is fraught with what is left undone,
Petitioners saying, "Don't betray us!"
"Let me see Lord"
What each wish would bring
And fail to achieve,
Who would benefit,
And who we would not please.
Wasted wish?
Now I see what I must do
The way is clear to me.

Pray our Collect for this Sunday:

O God, you give light to the blind and comfort to the sorrowing,
and in your Son you have given us a High Priest who has offered the true sacrifice
for us and yet can sympathise with us in our weakness:
hear the cry of your people and lead us home to our true country,
where with your Son and the Holy Spirit you live and reign,
one God in glory everlasting. **Amen.**

DO YOU SEE WAYS THAT *Valerie Hoare*

THIS MIGHT INFORM OUR FLOURISHING?

Shalom

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