**The Very Revd Dominic Barrington, Dean of York, reflects on Mark Mark 10.46-52 for the Last Sunday after Trinity, 27th October.**

A reading from the Gospel according to Mark: ‘As Jesus and his disciples and a large crowd were leaving Jericho, Bartimaeus, son of Timaeus, a blind beggar, was sitting by the roadside when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth. He began to shout out and say, “Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me.” Many sternly ordered him to be quiet, but he cried out even more loudly, “Son of David, have mercy on me!” Jesus stood still and said, “Call him here.” And they called the blind man, saying to him, “Take heart. Get up. He is calling you.” So, throwing off his cloak, he sprang up and came to Jesus. Then Jesus said to him, “What do you want me to do for you?” The blind man said to him, “My teacher, let me see again.” Jesus said to him, “Go. Your faith has made you well.” Immediately, he regained his sight and followed him on the way.’

And that's the question that I guess we have to ask ourselves. What in fact do we want God to do for us? The story of Bartimaeus - which is a well-known miracle story - the story of Bartimaeus comes across as a wonderful instance of Jesus performing the kind of healing miracle for which he is well known.

But there's more to it than that, more to it, therefore, which underscores the question about what we want God to do for us. Jesus says to his disciples, “Call him here.” Of itself that's quite interesting, because if you like we are involved in this story, Jesus asks the church to reach out to this person in need. And then what do they say to Bartimaeus? Well, in the translation we just read, they say, “Get up, he's calling you.” But not really in the Greek. It's more subtle than that in the original Greek, because the verb they use is the verb from which we also talk about resurrection. They are saying, “Be raised up,” because God is involved with you, God cares about you, come into contact with the living God.

And then when Jesus deals with Bartimaeus, again, we're slightly missing exactly what's going on. Because what I read from the Bible was ‘”Go,” says Jesus, “your faith has made you well.”’ In the original Greek that Mark penned, Jesus is actually saying, “Go on your way, your faith has saved you.” This is a story about the church helping people find salvation, whatever it is we might mean by that term, and the consequence of it all is that a child of God, who has been suffering for a long time, a child of God follows Jesus on the way, we are told. He becomes a Christian, if you like, because the first Christians were called ‘followers of the way’.

It's down to us, as we think about what we want God to do for us, it's down to us to hope that as the Church of God, as the Body of Christ, we will be able to show all God's children, and especially those of God's children who are suffering for whatever reason it might be. It's down to us to ask God to help us to bring them, to bring those children of God into God's presence. It's down to us to help raise them up. It's down to us to show them the joy of following on the way. I hope that our prayer will be that God will use us for that purpose. There isn't really anything greater to which God can call us.

So let us pray. Loving God, as you brought salvation to Bartimaeus, we pray that you will use us in the mission and ministry that you give to the church in this world, that you will use us to bring the good news of that salvation to all those around us. In Jesus’s name, Amen.