



Daily Reflections

JOURNEYING THROUGH CHALLENGING TIMES

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HEALING THE BLIND IN BETHSAIDA

By Sister Jeanne Fallon, CSJ

Today's Gospel

When Jesus and his disciples arrived at Bethsaida, people brought to him a blind man and begged Jesus to touch him. He took the blind man by the hand and led him outside the village. Putting spittle on his eyes he laid his hands on the man and asked, "Do you see anything?" Looking up the man replied, "I see people looking like trees and walking." Then he laid hands on the man's eyes a second time and he saw clearly; his sight was restored and he could see everything distinctly. Then he sent him home and said, "Do not even go into the village."

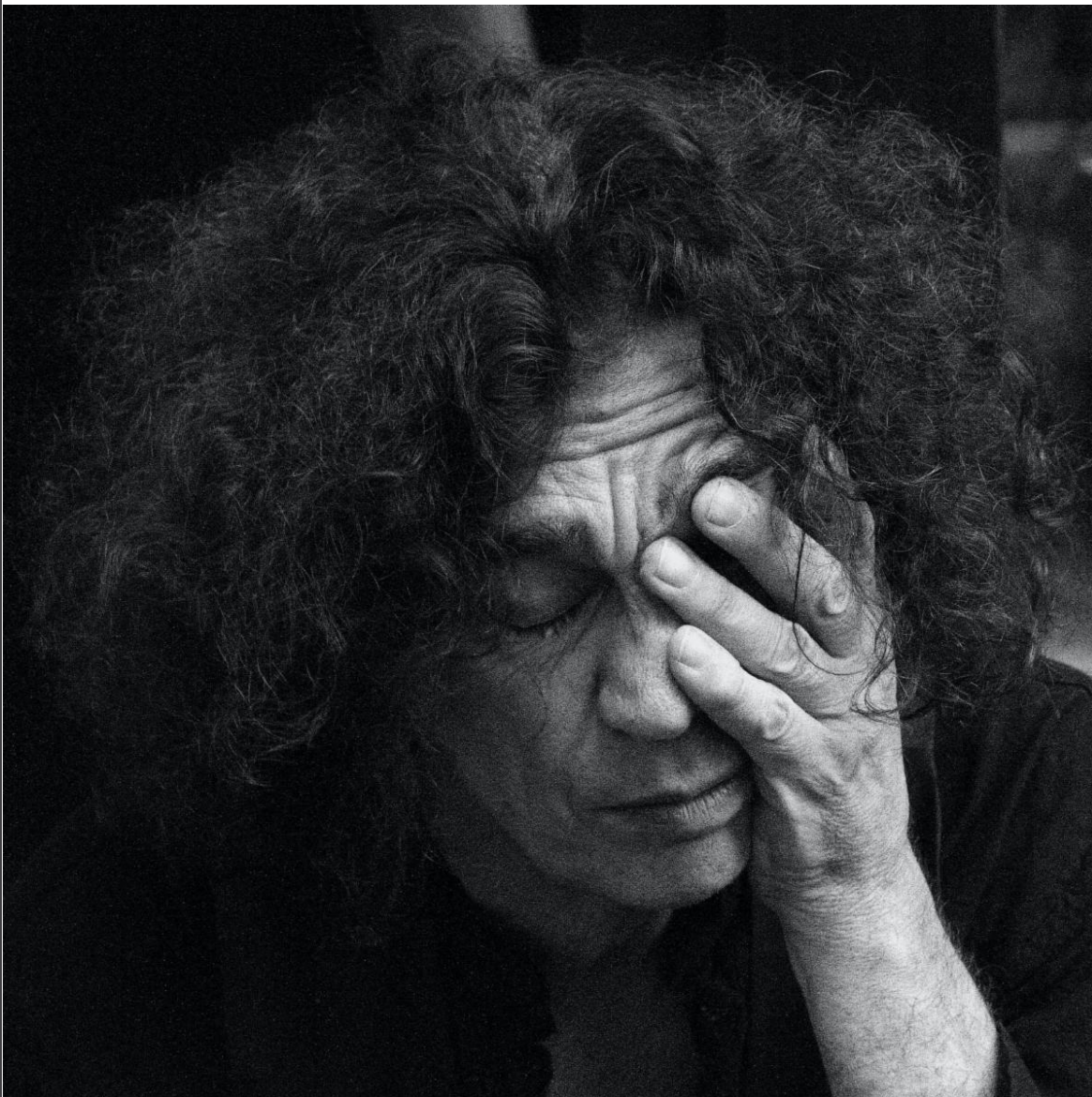
MARK 8:22-26

Reflection

Mark's story of the healing of a blind man in Bethsaida indicates a stage of the

disciples' understanding of Jesus. They had seen many healings and miraculous wonders, but this was the first time they saw Jesus heal a blind person. Jesus led the man away from the village to a secluded place, away from the view of others. Jesus' manner of healing was a gradual process, and he tenderly inquired how it was going for the man who desired to see again. A second time, Jesus laid his hands on the man's eyes and the healing was complete. He saw clearly! Jesus advised him to go home, not back into the village where some people were most likely wanting to see a spectacular event.

This healing of blindness in chapter 8 was a special cure, a symbol for the first disciples, and for all of us disciples today, who are always in need of Jesus' healing touch to open our inner vision, so we can recognize him and his Way. In the next section of this Gospel, Peter and the disciples would be able to get a glimpse of the road Jesus must take toward his death and resurrection, a road they had never imagined and even tried to keep Jesus from enduring. The disciples' lack of comprehension would gradually be enlightened as Jesus continued to walk with them and unfolded the story of God's incomprehensible love for us all, carried out in Jesus. These early disciples would **see clearly** only after the resurrection.



For Pondering and Prayer

- As a present-day disciple of Jesus Christ, do you remember a time when your eyes were opened to Jesus' mission? To his message? To the Way?
 - How did it happen? What illumined your soul? Perhaps the Word of God was broken open for you in Holy Scripture or in nature or in the voice of a loved one. How did you respond?
 - Has the grace of God been given to you in Christ Jesus? In what ways have you been enriched in him? (Adapted from 1Cor 1:4) What is the response of your heart?
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