

THIRTIETH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME  
Year B: Jer 31:7-9; Ps 126; Heb 5:1-6; Mk 10:46-52  
October 24, 2021  
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*“What do you want me to do for you?”* This was the question Jesus asked the blind man Bartimeus, who was calling out to Jesus, as he sat by the roadside begging. When we turn to Christ in moments of prayer, we can hear Him asking the same thing of us, *“What do you want me to do for you?”* As God, Jesus already knows what we need and what we want, but He invites us to express our needs and wants to Him in our prayer, as part of our relationship with Him. He wants us to acknowledge our utter dependence on Him, for guidance and direction in life. So, He invites us to think carefully about our lives and about what we think we need the most. And when we pray to Him, we should imagine Him asking us, *“What do you want me to do for you?”*

But, in our relationship with Christ, which we develop and deepen throughout our lives, we should also reach the point where we are willing to ask the same question to Christ: *“What do you want me to do for you?”* In any relationship of friendship, if we ask another person for a favor, we usually offer to reciprocate by saying, “If there’s ever anything I can do for you, please let me know.” It’s only polite and courteous to return a favor, and it’s a sign of our gratitude for the favors we receive. And it should be no different in our relationship with God. We often ask Him for many things, and He always gives us many things for which we never even ask. But at some point, we should be asking God, *“What do you want me to do for you?”*

The famous quote of President John F. Kennedy comes to mind: “Ask not what your country can do for you – ask what you can do for your country” (Inaugural Address, January 20, 1961). In the same way, we should not always be thinking about what God can do for us, but also about what we can do for God.

Sometimes, when we pray about a difficult situation or decision in our lives, we find ourselves asking God, “What should I do? What should I do?” But these moments are also opportunities to ask God, *“What should I do for you?”* – because, when we try to do the right thing and live as God desires, we are serving Him and doing something good for Him, by helping to build His kingdom here on earth. And, sometimes, when we ask what we can do for God, we start to see more clearly what we should ask God to do for us. When we focus on serving God, we see more clearly the things we should ask for from Him. Trying to serve God

helps us to have the right priorities in life. It helps us to value spiritual and eternal goods, because it helps us to think like God and to “see the big picture,” beyond any particular situations we may be facing in life. Asking what we can do for God helps us to see more clearly what we should ask Him to do for us.

During this month of October every year, the Church encourages us to focus on devotion to Mary, and in particular on praying the Holy Rosary, which is already very popular here at St. Julie’s, each morning after daily Mass, and also on Monday afternoons in October. Every time we say the *Hail Mary* prayer, we repeat the words that were spoken at the most important moment in human history, when the archangel said to Mary, “*Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with you*” (Lk 1:28), and when St. Elizabeth said to Mary, “*Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of our womb*” (Lk 1:42). These words announced to the world the Incarnation of God, which changed the world forever, and they also marked the moment when God was asking Mary to do something very important for Him. He was asking her to give her life to be the Mother of God and to cooperate in a singular way with the project of redemption. God was not saying to Mary, “*What do you want me to do for you?*” He was instead asking Mary to do something for Him, and she did – *thank God*, she did!

So, praying the Rosary and repeating the words of the *Hail Mary* prayer, which remind us of what Mary did for God, can inspire us to think and ask God what we can do *for Him*. And, in the process, we can also obtain untold graces for those for whom we pray. As one recent meditation on the Rosary says, “How many million miles rosary beads have traveled through troubled fingers only God and his Mother know. How many miracles of grace it has worked in the lives of those who were faithful to this devotion, it must keep the angels busy to record. How many times it has pulled back from the gates of hell some wayward soul who perhaps has no other devotion, we shall have to wait for heaven to discover” (Sister Mary Jean Dorcy, O.P., Reflection in MAGNIFICAT, October 7, 2021).

The more devoted we are to Mary, the Mother of God, the more we will be able to do something beautiful for God, as she did, and the more we will know what to ask for, if we hear God say to us, “*What do you want me to do for you?*”