



## HOPE IN A TIME OF RAPID CHANGES

Back in the spring, *Time* featured a cover story entitled "The Way We'll Work." This issue had this to say in the opening paragraph of the article: "Ten years ago, Facebook didn't exist. Ten years before that, we didn't have the Web. So who knows what jobs will be born a decade from now? Though unemployment is at a 25-year high, work will eventually return. But it won't look the same. No one is going to pay you just to show up. We will see a more flexible, more freelance, more collaborative and far less secure work world. It will be run by a generation with new values-and women will increasingly be at the controls."

In the midst of such flux and uncertainty, it's perhaps difficult to join Jeremiah's upbeat proclamation of the future. Few of us in the current climate find ourselves shouting for joy and exulting. We may feel like the people of Judah in that we need to be delivered from an uncertain and changing future. The world is changing fast and not all that change is perceived to be good. Insecurity reigns. We find ourselves more like the people of Judah when they departed in tears.

**We can identify with Bartimaeus in today 's Gospel.** We might sometimes feel like we're sitting at the roadside begging, our lives not going the way we planned. "Bartimaeus" means "Son of Timaeus." It is rare in Mark for the evangelist to give us the name of someone Jesus heals. There was genuine fear in the Marcan community in Rome, shortly after the sack and destruction of Jerusalem and the temple. Christianity was viewed as a form of Judaism, and the Jews were not well thought of by Rome. Christians had already suffered under Nero. Perhaps in our rapidly changing times we find ourselves identifying with Bartimaeus as he cries out "Son of David, have pity on me."

**Jesus asks Bartimaeus a question: "What do you want me to do for you?"** Bartimaeus gives the right answer, "Master, I want to see." In an earlier chapter of Mark, James and John are asked the same question: "What do you want me to do for you?" The apostles give the wrong answer. They want to sit at Jesus' right and left hands in the kingdom of God. Jesus asks them if they are willing to drink the cup that he must drink. They answer "yes," but when Jesus is enthroned upon the cross, Mark makes it clear that there are crucified revolutionaries at his right and at his left and they are not James and John.

**What answer do we give to the question from Jesus "What do you want me to do for you?"** Do we answer like Bartimaeus or like James and John? Perhaps we'd ask for a more secure and certain future. A more secure and certain future is promised us by Jesus, Jeremiah and the author of the Letter to the Hebrews today. God promises through the voice of his prophet that God will console and guide us. God promises to be a father to us. The author of Hebrews assures us that we have in Christ a high priest who intercedes for us. It doesn't get better than that! In the Gospel the disciples and the crowd tell Bartimaeus and us: "Take courage; get up, Jesus is calling you."

By baptism we are yoked to Christ and he to us in a bond that can never be broken. Let us hear the words of the disciples in the Gospel, "Take courage; get up, Jesus is calling you." Like Bartimaeus, let us follow Jesus along the way, with the Eucharist as our sustenance.

Your faith  
has  
saved  
you



*Immediately the blind man received his sight and followed Jesus on the way.....Mark 10:46-52*