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CHURCHES MATTER

# Connect!

Uniting Word & World

For Sunday, October 25, 2015

What Are You Looking For?

## This Sunday's Scripture Readings

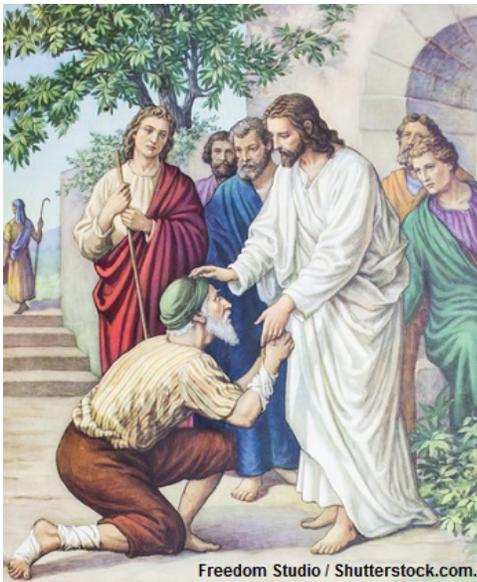
30<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time

<http://new.usccb.org/bible/readings/102515.cfm>

Jeremiah 31:7-9

Hebrews 5:1-6

Mark 10:46-52



Nearly thirty years ago, U2 proclaimed in their hit song, “[I Still Haven't Found What I'm Looking For](#)”—an anthem for searchers everywhere. A generation later, it seems, we're still searching.

A study a few years back found that people are changing religions at a phenomenal rate. According to [Pew](#):

“More than four in 10 American adults are no longer members of the religion they were brought up in, while about one in 10 changed religion, then went back to the one they left, the study found. Just under five in 10—47 percent—have never changed faith.

“Some have switched more than once, and a small number have changed three times or more, according to the study.”

A more recent survey, from this year, found an increase [in the number of “nones”](#):

“People who self-identify as atheists or agnostics (about 7% of all U.S. adults), as well as those who say their religion is ‘nothing in particular,’ now account for a combined 22.8% of U.S. adults—up from 16.1% in 2007. The growth of the ‘nones’ has been powered in part by religious switching. Nearly one-in-five U.S. adults (18%) were raised as Christians or members of some other religion, but now say they have no religious affiliation.”

So many of us are struggling with a restless sense of searching, particularly in matters of faith. So is it any wonder that this Sunday's Gospel strikes such a powerful chord: the story of a blind beggar named Bartimaeus who, when asked by Jesus what he wants, answers with profound directness and simplicity: “Master, I want to see.”

Isn't that the common barometer of every person who yearns for a deeper faith, a clearer purpose, a sense of direction? We want to see. Daily life can be obscured by so much—ambition, pressure, responsibilities. We want to see what our purpose is. We want to see hope. We want to see the face of God.

The Gospel suggests that simply having that desire, that humble yearning, may be enough. A beggar encounters Christ, cries out for pity, and is given the miraculous gift of sight. And with that gift, he does the only thing he can do: he becomes a follower of Christ.

This Gospel challenges us to ask ourselves: What are we searching for? What do we want to see? And it offers the reassurance that we can see, and understand, by taking our case to Christ, and pleading our cause, and taking a leap of faith.

It also suggests that if some of us still haven't found what we're looking for, well, maybe we have been looking in the wrong places.

Dcn. Greg Kandra

## PRAYER

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Almighty ever-living God,  
increase our faith, hope and charity,  
and make us love what you command,  
so that we may merit what you promise.  
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, for ever and ever.

—Collect for 30th Sunday in Ordinary Time. Excerpt from the English translation of *The Roman Missal* © 2010, ICEL. All rights reserved.

## NOTICES

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### RESPECT LIFE MONTH

October is Respect Life Month. The USCCB has several resources available to encourage special events and activities throughout October. View the materials at <http://usccb.org/about/pro-life-activities/respect-life-program/index.cfm>.

### PRIESTHOOD SUNDAY

Priesthood Sunday is celebrated on October 25 in 2015. This day of appreciation for priests is sponsored by USA Council of Serra International. You can learn more and find resources for celebrating in your parish at <http://www.priestsunday.org>. There are also resources available for LPi customers on the [Art & Media Portal](#).

### INTERNATIONAL CATHOLIC STEWARDSHIP CONFERENCE, October 22–25

The International Catholic Stewardship Council (ICSC) is hosting its annual conference in Chicago, IL from October 22–25 at the Hyatt Regency Chicago. For more information on the conference and to register, visit <http://catholicstewardship.com/programs-a-events/annual-conference/2015-annual-conference-information>.

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