

Homily for eighth Sunday of year, February 27, 2022

In one of his sermons Father George Rutler, a retired priest of the Archdiocese of New York and a prolific author, told the following story:

He was once on a hotel elevator with a former Secretary of State, a man who had received just about every honor the world has to offer

They were both going to the same dinner, but they got off on the wrong floor.

The Secretary said to him, "I know the way; just follow me".

They walked down a hall, and Father Rutler followed him around the corner.

"It's through there", he said. And he confidently opened the door. It was the laundry room!

The Secretary was, on that night, a blind guide who led an unsuspecting priest to the wrong place.

In today's gospel Jesus concludes his "sermon on the plain", which is Luke's version of Our Lord's "sermon on the mount" by making reference to the spiritually blind, a likely reference to some of the leaders of the Chosen People. "Can a blind person guide a blind person? Will not both fall into a pit? (Lk. 6:39) In Matthew's gospel those who lead the Jewish people astray are called "blind guides (Mt. 23:24)". Generally, they opposed the ministry of Jesus.

In ancient Israel eye disease was widespread. Without the benefit of modern advances in the field of medicine, the blind and visually impaired were often shunned and tended to come together for assisting one another and protecting themselves.

Blind people often led other blind people.

Obviously, one who can see clearly is better equipped to lead one who cannot see.

Daily I am reminded that without my corrective lenses, I, too, would be legally blind, and unable to move about without stumbling and falling. I would be in no position to lead others.

No human being knows the way as Our Lord Jesus Christ who sees clearly and whose vision is not impaired.

Who are we following today?

Consider social media and the number of celebrities, elected leaders and experts in the world of finance who have large followings on Twitter, Tik-Tok and Facebook. Their names are well known to us: Beyonce, Adele, Snoop Dog, Bill Gates, and many others. Thousands of admirers look forward to their daily message.

It seems that fewer of us are turning to our supreme teacher Jesus Christ, for daily inspiration. "A disciple is not above his teacher" (Lk. 6:41).

A good spiritual guide is one who acknowledges his need of a savior.

Is your spiritual guide a disciple of Jesus Christ?

Are we humble enough to admit of our spiritual blindness? Do we always see clearly?

There is a humorous cartoon of two elderly men, an eye doctor and his patient, standing in front of an eye chart in the doctor's office. The doctor speaks. "Sam, your eyes are fine, just fine. It is just that in the eye chart the letters are too small".

If our leaders are unable or unwilling to guide and direct us on the right path to Christ and to God, then we must look elsewhere for assistance.

If only because we have turned to Christ for guidance that we see clearly.