

## *Ordinary Time 30B 2015*

### *I Want to See!*

A few weeks ago I walked into the sacristy and saw a beautiful crucifix hanging on the wall that I had never seen before. And so I asked our sacristan who put the crucifix on the wall. She looked at me strangely and said, “It has always been there!” Yes, it had always been there, but I had never seen it.

Now I know you may think I was having another senior moment, but I suspect that something similar has happened to you as well. One day you notice something that has always been there, but for one reason or another, you have never seen it. For example, how many of you have seen the angels that are looking down on you? You come to this church week in and week out, but I suspect that some of you have never seen those angels looking down upon us, praying and worshipping with us, week after week.

You see, although we can see, there are lots of things we cannot see with our eyes. We think we see what is right before our eyes, but no matter how intently we look, we always miss something; and there are things we never see.

If you think about it, the blind man of today’s gospel had one advantage over us: he knew he couldn’t see. And so when Jesus asked him what he wanted, he responded, “Lord, I want to see!” And then, after Jesus restored his sight, the man saw something nobody else could see or understand. He saw Jesus in a whole new way; he understood that Jesus was the Son of God. And because he understood who Jesus was, he followed him on the way; he followed him in the way of discipleship. Not only did he see Jesus with his eyes; he saw Jesus *with the eyes of faith*; and so Jesus says to him, “your faith has saved.”

Faith is another way of seeing that enables us to see what we cannot see, even though it is right in front of us. Faith is another way of seeing and understanding because it allows us to see what our eyes cannot see. Let me give you an example.

In 1961 the Soviet Union sent the first cosmonaut, Yuri Gargarin, into outer space. When Gargarin returned from outer space, he gleefully said, “I looked and I looked but I didn’t see God.” While his remark may have surprised some people, it revealed a great misunderstanding about God and faith—as though God were a person like us living somewhere in outer space that we can see with our eyes.

But this is not the God in whom we believe. This is not the God and Father of Jesus Christ who is present to us each day. We walk by faith and not by sight, and so the God in whom we believe can only be seen with the eyes of faith. It takes faith to see the presence of God in the mercy and kindness of others. It takes faith sees the presence of God in the suffering and hardship of the others. But when believe, then we see.

Every time we gather for Mass I think of those angels looking down on us, and they remind me that although we cannot see them, the heavenly choirs of angels join with us every time we worship God. They remind me that God is present in our midst. For when we believe, we understand what we cannot see. When we believe, we understand how God is present and at work in our lives even in the dark and difficult moments of life.