

Seeing...

Not long ago, I was stuck in traffic heading from the 241 to the 91. Those who know that confluence, know it can get really backed up, especially on a Friday afternoon. Unable to move more than a few feet every few minutes, I considered the ways I could best use my time. I considered abandoning my vehicle and walking (it would be faster), but that fleeting thought was discarded as quickly as it came, as impractical. And so, as I often do when I'm on the road, I turned to prayer.

This time it was the podcast, "[Pray-as-you-go](#)," a very helpful resource. It is produced by some Jesuits in England, and the daily podcasts are just 10-13 minutes long. They open with a bell toll and a little music, to center ourselves, and then a short reading from Holy Scripture. That reading is followed usually by just a few provocative and thoughtful questions, that help us to consider the passage more deeply. A final doxology, and that's it, until the next day.

Pray-as-you-go was started as Lenten offering in 2006 by Fr. Peter Scally SJ, a British Jesuit, who created the daily podcast "to allow commuters a quick burst of prayer using Ignatian prayer techniques."* St. Ignatius encouraged us to use imagination in our prayer and when reading scripture, indeed to use all of our God-given senses, to better enter into and comprehend the text.

I don't listen to the podcast daily, though I probably ought. I tend to pray the Daily Office instead. But I do tune in about once or twice a week. And I was grateful that I did that day. Something I might not have done had the traffic been flowing. "What a blessing," I thought, that I had this moment. That changed my perspective about the traffic, and my urgency to just get to where I was going. Actually, it changed my perspective on many things, as prayer always does. And so, I paused and I prayed and I listened.

That day, the reading was from Ephesians. But the questions that followed the passage were unexpected and have remained with me. The commentator asked, "What are your blind spots?" And added something to the effect of, "have you ever asked God to help you to see as God sees?"

Of course, we've all got our blind spots. And by their very definition we are unaware of what they may be. But have we ever asked God, as that commentator suggested, to show us our blind spots? To make us aware of what we are not seeing, feeling, hearing, perceiving. Have we ever asked God to help us to see as God sees? To see the world, to see other people, to see those we might rather not see, as God sees them? This has become a prayer for me and one that I've taken to reflecting upon more purposefully. Lord, help me to see as you see! Show me my blind spots, that I might perceive aright and act more lovingly.

These questions make me think about the story we heard at the end of October, regarding the blind man, Bartimaeus, whom our Lord encounters on his way out of Jericho. It's a lesson we all know well (and if you don't, you can find it here). Ordinarily, we focus on the transformation to Bartimaeus, how he goes from begging at the roadside to joyfully following Jesus. Or we focus upon the miraculous power in Jesus, who restores sight to this blind man and thus reveals Jesus' own divinity. But perhaps we are like Bartimaeus and need to see again, to have our eyes opened, and to see as Jesus sees, to then joyfully follow our Lord.

As always, I welcome your feedback: frpatrick@scbythesea.org

Yours in Christ,

Fr. Patrick

1 <https://pray-as-you-go.org/about-us>