

Before I went to seminary, I studied Theology for two year in Ohio. One of my classmates in graduate school was Bob. Bob was unique among us, because Bob was blind. Bob had a long fiberglass cane, he had a laptop that didn't have a screen on it – but it would speak what was typed into it, he had a Bible that looked like an MP3 player.

The first time I really took notice of Bob was at Mass. You see, Bob was a reader. He would come early before Mass, and someone would read the Scriptures out loud to him, and he would type it on a Braille typewriter. Then when it was time for him to read, someone would help him up the steps to the Ambo, and Bob would proclaim the Word at Mass.

For the first couple of semesters, I knew Bob at a distance.

During summer school, on the first day of classes, Bob and I were again in class. But since it wasn't a regular semester, there were a lot of new students there. After class let out, I was putting away my things, and when I looked up, everybody had left – everybody, except me and Bob.

I headed for the door, but I noticed that Bob was just standing there in the mess of chairs and desks. I asked him if he needed anything, and he said that he wasn't familiar with this building and could I walk him home.

I wasn't sure what to do. Pretty much, Bob would hold onto my arm, and follow me. That was about it. Well, almost. The minute we got out of class, we walked through a double doorway that had one of those metal bars in the middle. I walked through the left side, and Bob walked right into the metal bar.

You see, it was easy to forget that Bob was blind. He was a decent guy, and very affable. He knew all sorts of things, and could make conversation on just about anything. He had a great sense of humor, and at Mass, in the pews, he had a great singing voice.

So, Bob put me at ease, and for the most part I relaxed – except for making sure that I didn't walk him into another metal bar. Bob was very comfortable with his blindness, and if it didn't bother him, I was not going to let it bother me.

Bob used a lot of technology to overcome his physical blindness – and when he didn't have some-THING to help him, he was very willing and able to allow some-ONE to help.

In today's reading, the Prophet Isaiah speaks of the coming of the Messiah and tells us,

*the eyes of the blind [will] be opened,
the ears of the deaf [will] be cleared;
then will the lame leap like a stag,
then the tongue of the mute will sing.*

And in today's Gospel, we hear how Jesus heals a deaf-mute, who, despite being told NOT to say anything about it, goes around proclaiming the Glory of God in the healing.

For those of us who aren't blind, deaf, lame, or mute – this may all sound very interesting, but how does this apply in our lives.

Well, it's easy to get caught up in the external miracles spoken of by the prophets, and the external miracles of Jesus' ministry.

But what's more important are the internal miracles – the spiritual miracles.

Oftentimes, we tend to overlook spiritual things – that is, we are blind to God's actions.

Or maybe we don't really listen to God's Word, when it is read from Scripture or spoken in prayer.

Maybe we fail to act in situations where we know we could help someone, but instead we just mind our own business.

And even if we're aware of God's glory and the greatness of God's action in our lives – we might keep our mouths shut about what it is the God has done for us.

In those cases, even though we have a functioning set of eyes, ears, arms and legs, and mouth ... we are spiritually blind, spiritually deaf, spiritually lame, or spiritually mute.

And what do we do to overcome these spiritual handicaps?

We need some spiritual TECHNOLOGY to help us. And we have that in the Sacraments – most notably the Sacraments of Healing – reconciliation and anointing. We have the Eucharist. For those of us who are married, we have the graces of Holy Matrimony. For us in Holy Orders, we have those graces.

For ALL of us, we have the graces of Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Eucharist.

But when we don't use those THINGS to help us through our spiritual handicaps, we have the three PERSONS of the Trinity – the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit – to help us. And if we're not on speaking terms with Them, we have the saints.

And so, this week, let's do a spiritual examination – are we lacking in any areas? Are we missing out on the fullness of the Divine life we share as sons and daughters of God?

Take advantage of the spiritual TECHNOLOGY in the Sacraments. And if you're somewhere where you don't have access to the spiritual TECHNOLOGY ... then go straight to the SOURCE – and call out to JESUS. Let Jesus Christ touch your spiritual eyes, your spiritual ears, your spiritual tongue ... let Him heal your spiritual faculties so that you can assume your rightful place as a child of God the Father, redeemed in Christ and fully exercising the gifts of the Holy Spirit.