



**Seeing with the Heart Retreat**  
St. Simon Catholic Parish, Los Altos, CA  
Tuesday, March 5, 2024

**Living out of Great Desires**

Van Gogh, *The Good Samaritan* (1890, Kröller-Müller Museum, Netherlands)  
Caravaggio, *The Conversion of St. Paul on the Road to Damascus*  
(1601, Santa Maria del Popolo, Rome)

“The persons who make the Exercises will benefit greatly by entering upon them with great spirit and generosity toward their Creator and Lord, and by offering all of their desires and freedom to him so that His Divine Majesty can make us of their persons and of all they possess ...” (SpEx n.5).

“I will speak as one making an offering with deep affection, and say: ‘Take, Lord, and receive all my liberty, my memory, my understanding, and all my will – all that I have and possess. You, Lord, have given all that to me. I now give it back to you, O Lord. All of it is yours. Dispose of it according to your will. Give me love of yourself along with your grace, for that is enough for me’” (SpEx n.234).

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- Imagine Jesus saying to you as he said to Bartimaeus, “What do you want me to do for you?” (Mark 10: 46-52) or to the disciples, “What are you looking for?” (John 1: 35-37). How do you respond? What great desires stir up in you?
  - Reflect on the Caravaggio painting, *Conversion of Saint Paul on the Road to Damascus*. How might God be capturing your heart and mind now? Stirred by gratitude, what offering do you wish to make now, out of great freedom?
  - Reflect on the Parable of the Good Samaritan and Van Gogh’s painting. When have you identified with the one needing help? With the two officials who walked by? With the Good Samaritan?
  - Consider Greg Boyle’s statement: “The strategy of Jesus is not centered in taking the right stand on issues but rather standing in the right place – with the outcast and those relegated to the margins.” (*Seeing with the Heart*, p. 128). Because what and whom you see depends on where you stand, reflect on where you usually stand and with whom? How might you be called to enlarge your vision (and your heart) by going to different places and spending time with different people than you are used to?
  - Consider people who are models of magnanimity and humility, people who do great things with largeness of heart and generosity of spirit. What makes them so laudable? Which of their virtues or personal attributes do you wish to emulate?
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## **Luke 10: 29-37 (The Parable of the Good Samaritan)**

But because [the scholar of the law] wished to justify himself, he said to Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?”

Jesus replied, “A man fell victim to robbers as he went down from Jerusalem to Jericho. They stripped and beat him and went off leaving him half-dead.

A priest happened to be going down that road, but when he saw him, he passed by on the opposite side. Likewise, a Levite came to the place, and when he saw him, he passed by on the opposite side.

But a Samaritan traveler who came upon him was moved with compassion at the sight. He approached the victim, poured oil and wine over his wounds and bandaged them. Then he lifted him up on his own animal, took him to an inn and cared for him. The next day he took out two silver coins and gave them to the innkeeper with the instruction, ‘Take care of him. If you spend more than what I have given you, I shall repay you on my way back.’

Which of these three, in your opinion, was neighbor to the robbers’ victim?”

He answered, “The one who treated him with mercy.”

Jesus said to him, “Go and do likewise.”