

The Fourth Sunday of Lent (The Second Scrutiny for the RCIA)

March 11, 2018

Gospel ~ John 9: 1-41

As Jesus passed by he saw a man blind from birth.
His disciples asked him,
"Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents,
that he was born blind?"
Jesus answered, "Neither he nor his parents sinned;
it is so that the works of God might be made visible through him.
We have to do the works of the one who sent me while it is day.
Night is coming when no one can work.
While I am in the world, I am the light of the world."
When he had said this, he spat on the ground
and made clay with the saliva, and smeared the clay on his eyes,
and said to him,
"Go wash in the Pool of Siloam" —which means Sent—.
So he went and washed, and came back able to see.

His neighbors and those who had seen him earlier
as a beggar said,
"Isn't this the one who used to sit and beg?" Some said, "It is,"
but others said, "No, he just looks like him." He said, "I am."
So they said to him, "How were your eyes opened?"
He replied,
"The man called Jesus made clay and anointed my eyes
and told me, 'Go to Siloam and wash.'
So I went there and washed and was able to see."
And they said to him, "Where is he?" He said, "I don't know."

They brought the one who was once blind to the Pharisees.
Now Jesus had made clay and opened his eyes on a sabbath.
So then the Pharisees also asked him how he was able to see.
He said to them,
"He put clay on my eyes, and I washed, and now I can see."
So some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God,
because he does not keep the sabbath."
But others said, "How can a sinful man do such signs?"
And there was a division among them.
So they said to the blind man again,
"What do you have to say about him,
since he opened your eyes?" He said, "He is a prophet."

Now the Jews did not believe
that he had been blind and gained his sight
until they summoned the parents
of the one who had gained his sight.
They asked them, "Is this your son, who you say was born blind?
How does he now see?"
His parents answered and said,
"We know that this is our son and that he was born blind.
We do not know how he sees now,
nor do we know who opened his eyes.
Ask him, he is of age; he can speak for himself."
His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews,
for the Jews had already agreed
that if anyone acknowledged him as the Christ,
he would be expelled from the synagogue.
For this reason his parents said,
"He is of age; question him."

So a second time they called the man who had been blind
and said to him, "Give God the praise!
We know that this man is a sinner."
He replied,
"If he is a sinner, I do not know.
One thing I do know is that I was blind and now I see."
So they said to him,
"What did he do to you?
How did he open your eyes?"
He answered them,
"I told you already and you did not listen.
Why do you want to hear it again?
Do you want to become his disciples, too?"
They ridiculed him and said,
"You are that man's disciple;
we are disciples of Moses!
We know that God spoke to Moses,
but we do not know where this one is from."
The man answered and said to them,
"This is what is so amazing,
that you do not know where he is from, yet he opened my eyes.
We know that God does not listen to sinners,
but if one is devout and does his will, he listens to him.
It is unheard of that anyone
ever opened the eyes of a person born blind.
If this man were not from God,
he would not be able to do anything."
They answered and said to him,
"You were born totally in sin,
and are you trying to teach us?"
Then they threw him out.

When Jesus heard that they had thrown him out,
he found him and said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?"
He answered and said,
"Who is he, sir, that I may believe in him?"
Jesus said to him,
"You have seen him,
the one speaking with you is he."
He said,
"I do believe, Lord," and he worshiped him.
Then Jesus said,
"I came into this world for judgment,
so that those who do not see might see,
and those who do see might become blind."

Some of the Pharisees who were
with him heard this
and said to him,
"Surely we are not also blind,
are we?"
Jesus said to them,
"If you were blind,
you would have no sin;
but now you are saying,
'We see,' so your sin remains.



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Open My Eyes

Open my eyes Lord, help me to see your face
Open my eyes Lord, help me to see

Open my ears Lord, help me to hear your voice
Open my ears Lord, help me to hear

Open my heart Lord, help me to love like you
Open my heart Lord, help me to love

*And the first shall be last, and our eyes are opened
and we'll hear like never before
And we'll speak in new ways, and we'll see God's face
in places we've never known*

I live within you, deep in your heart, O Love
I live within you, rest now in me

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Psalm 23

*Shepherd me, O God, beyond my wants,
beyond my fears, from death into life.*

Amazing Grace

Amazing grace, how sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me
I once was lost, but now am found
was blind, but now I see

Twice grace that taught my heart to fear
and grace my fears relieved
How precious did that grace appear
the hour I first believed

The Lord has promised good to me
His word my hope secures
He will my shield and portion be
As long as life endures

Text: St. 1-4, John Newton, 1725-1807; st. 5 attr. to John Rees, fl.1859
Tune: NEW BRITAIN, CM; Virginia Harmony, 1831; acc. by Diana Kodner, b.1957



“Ground Rules” for Small Group Faith Sharing

Maintain confidentiality – “Whatever happens in small group stays in small group.”

Judgment-free zone – You don’t have to agree with everyone, but you have to have respect for everyone.

No “shut downs” or “put downs” – See Christ in one another, BE Christ to one another.

Don’t be a “discussion hog” – Be sure that everyone that wants to gets a chance to share.

Leave room for the Spirit – Silence is OK! Not everyone has to share.

Practice active listening – Avoid interrupting, fidgeting, criticizing, lecturing, or thinking of what you’re going to say while another person is speaking.

Questions are a guide - You do not have to answer all of them or go in order.

Be open – God is doing amazing things!

Questions for Reflection on the Gospel

1. Where in this Gospel do you find yourself?
2. What is the correlation between faith and sight?
3. In the beginning of the Gospel, the blind man was simply a man on the street. By the end of the Gospel he was thrown out of the synagogue for defending Jesus. What changed him into a disciple?
4. From what “blindness” do you need healing in your spiritual life at this moment?
5. In the first reading this week, we hear insight from 1 Samuel: “Not as man sees does God see . . . but the LORD looks into the heart.” What does it mean to see with the eyes of God? How can we train ourselves to better do this?
6. What are some of the obstacles that continue to blind us from seeing the heart of another as God does? What are the consequences of our common participation in blindness?
7. What signs of God’s grace are visible, amidst the evil in our world? What are some signs of blindness around us? What is our responsibility to bring the light of Christ into the darkness of unjust social structures?

Words from our Holy Father

The path of the blind man . . . is a gradual process that begins with knowing Jesus’ name. He does not know anything else about him. In fact, he says: “The man called Jesus made clay and anointed my eyes” . . . After he is thrown out of the Temple, excluded from society, Jesus finds him again and “opens his eyes” a second time, revealing to him his (Jesus’) true identity: “I am the Messiah,” he tells him. At this point, the man who was blind exclaims: “I believe, Lord!” . . . This is a passage of the Gospel that gives us a glimpse of the drama of the interior blindness of many people. And we glimpse our own interior blindness too because we sometimes have moments of such blindness. . . . Let us open ourselves to the light of the Lord. He awaits us always in order to enable us to see better, to give us more light, to forgive us. -Pope Francis, Daily Homily, 3/30/14

Petitions

Our response: “We do believe, Lord.”

Closing Prayer

Jesus, cleanse our blind eyes. Wash away the mud of doubt and fear, and move us from unseeing souls to believers, from bystanders to disciples, and from walkers in darkness to lamps for your light. Lord, let our souls see with your eyes; let our vision be yours. In your great and holy name we pray. Amen.