

# Fourth Sunday of Lent

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Imagine living our whole life without ever seeing light — never seeing the face of our parents, the beauty of nature, or even our own reflection. The man in today’s Gospel lived like that from birth. He knew only darkness. Then, one encounter with Jesus changed everything. Yet, the surprising truth in today’s Gospel is this: the man who was born blind began to see, and those who had sight remained blind.

In the Gospel of John, Jesus meets a man who had been blind from birth; living in darkness for many years. People only saw him as a beggar sitting by the roadside. To them, he was someone to be ignored or pitied. Jesus saw something much deeper: Jesus saw a person in whom the glory of God would be revealed. Jesus heals him in a very unusual way: He makes mud from the dust of the earth, places it on the man’s eyes, and tells him to wash his eyes in the pool of Siloam. The man obeys, goes to the pool, washes his eyes, and comes back able to see!

The greatest miracle in this story, however, is not that the man receives physical sight; it is that he gradually receives spiritual sight!

At first he says: “The man called Jesus healed me.” Later he says: “He is a prophet.” Finally, when he meets Jesus again, he says: “Lord, I believe!” and worships Him. His eyes are opened not only to the world around him, but also to the identity of Christ.

At the same time, the Gospel presents another group of people — the Pharisees. They had perfectly healthy eyes. They saw the miracle and heard the blind man’s testimony; yet they refused to believe. Their pride and prejudice prevented them from recognizing the truth. This teaches us a very important lesson: spiritual blindness is far worse than physical blindness. The blind man could not see with his



physical eyes, but his heart was open to the truth. The Pharisees could see everything around them, but they could not see God standing before them.

Another example of how God sees differently from human beings comes from the First Reading from the First Book of Samuel. When the prophet Samuel arrived at the home of Jesse to anoint the new king of Israel, Jesse presented his strong and impressive sons. Anyone looking at the strapping young sons would think they were worthy and obvious choices. Instead, God said to Samuel: “Human beings look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.” Eventually, the one whom no one expected, the young shepherd, David, was chosen and anointed King of Israel. In the eyes of his father and brothers, he was just a shepherd boy. In the eyes of God, he was the chosen king.

How often do we judge people by their appearance, status, or reputation? God looks much deeper. God sees the heart.

In the Second Reading, in his Epistle to the Ephesians, St. Paul affirms our way forward: “Once you were darkness, but now in the Lord you are light. Live as children of light.” Through Christ we have received the light of faith. Now, we are called to walk in that light every day. This is why the season of Lent is such an important time for us: Lent is a time when we ask God to heal our spiritual blindness. Sometimes our blindness may come from pride; from prejudice; from indifference. When pride fills our hearts, we become like the Pharisees: we think we know everything and we become closed to God’s grace. The blind man, however, shows us another way: the way of humility and openness. Because his heart was open, he was able to recognize Jesus more and more clearly.

Dear brothers and sisters, the question posed in the Gospel today does not only concern the blind man. The real question is posed to each one of us: Are there areas

in our lives where we are spiritually blind? Do we fail to recognize God working in our lives? Do we fail to see Christ in our brothers and sisters?

The blind man received not only the gift of sight, but also the gift of faith.

The Pharisees, however, refused to admit their blindness and remained in darkness.

The lesson for us is very clear: it is only when we admit our blindness that Christ will give us sight. So during this Lenten season, let us pray with humility: “Lord, open the eyes of my heart. Open my eyes to see your presence in my life. Open my eyes to recognize you in my brothers and sisters. Open my eyes to walk always in your light.”

When Christ opens our eyes, we will truly live as St. Paul invites us to live: as children of the light!