

FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT



See into Our Hearts

Father Almighty,
you who have blessed our ancestors
and anointed them with the oil of
your Spirit;
who have given your grace and light to
those in need
and guided the hands of our leaders in faith.
See into our hearts today,
and find us ready to receive you,
as you guided Samuel to recognize the
Lord's chosen.
May we open our eyes to see you, and our
hearts to accept you,
and may we find Christ in others as you
guide us.
Teach us to know your ways,
to follow your path,
and to trust in your guidance.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

March 26, 2017

Healing Our Blindness



Today's Readings: 1 Samuel 16:1b, 6–7, 10–13a; Psalm 23:1–3a, 3b–4, 5, 6; Ephesians 5:8–14; John 9:1–41. The Gospel passage for today tells the story of a man being healed of his blindness. However, the exchanges between the man and Jesus and those among onlookers all reveal the many deeper meanings of this account. To be relieved of blindness in our lives is challenging for us. It is so much easier to continue in blindness than to allow ourselves to be healed. Even at the end of the Gospel passage, some of the Pharisees ask, “Surely we are not also blind, are we?” They may well be revealing our thoughts.

This is the day and the season to ask that question about our blindness, and to find a way to “see.” Find where you are blind, and seek a way to wash away the blindness. Take some time to find where Jesus is pointing out the path to healing for you. Go to the same prayerful space each day,

as did the blind man, and pray and wait. Name your blindness, and in naming, perhaps find ways you can wash it clean. Find another person, as did the witnesses in the Gospel, to discuss this blind spot of yours and do not blame another for your loss of sight.

We are reminded that being blind leaves us in the dark, both literally and figuratively, but also that Jesus is our Light. Jesus tells the blind man to wash in the pool at that moment. It is Jesus who points out that his path is where our blindness might be washed away so that we may see. Often we are not completely healed in one moment, but the revealing light is gradually revealed to us. Lent provides an opportunity to focus more intently on healing our blindness, and seeing more of the Light. As we proceed through Lent, we should pray that our eyes are opened.



THIS WEEK AT HOME

Monday, March 27

Remember When

In today's Gospel passage, John reminds us that we often recognize the truth, the Christ, or God's grace, only after the fact. Jesus leaves Galilee only to return, and yet many are still skeptical. Today, spend time in prayer not only looking forward, but remembering when God's grace was given without notification. Learn to slow down and appreciate the presence of Christ in the things of beauty that you see daily. *Today's Readings: Isaiah 65:17–21; Psalm 30:2 and 4, 5–6, 11–12a, 13b; John 4:43–54.*

Tuesday, March 28

Life-Giving Water

Both readings today speak of an abundance of water that is both fruitful and healing. Such is our baptismal water, giving us life again and again, and cleansing us. Throughout Lent, we are reminded that our Baptism continues to be our source of life, health, faith, and spiritual nourishment. In your Lenten prayer space, include a small bowl of baptismal water as a reminder of what your Lenten practices are renewing within you. *Today's Readings: Ezekiel 47:1–9, 12; Psalm 46:2–3, 4–5, 8–9; John 5:1–16.*

Wednesday, March 29

Mercy to the Afflicted

Isaiah proclaims a day of salvation that is one of compassion, mercy, pity, and comfort. These are the signs of the Lord's favor. As we proceed through Lent, we should consider the place that compassion and mercy have in our lives. The Lord comforts his people and so must we. Perhaps today you might be more intentional about recognizing the needs of another and responding appropriately. *Today's Readings: Isaiah 49:8–15; Psalm 145:8–9, 13cd–14, 17–18; John 5:17–30.*

Thursday, March 30

The Faith of Moses

Today, in all three readings, Exodus, Psalm 106, and John, we hear about the faith and strong belief of Moses. His belief in God saved the people from destruction on more than one occasion. He pleads with the Lord to relent in punishing his stiff-necked people. If only our faith could be that firm, that secure. *Today's Readings: Exodus 32:7–14; Psalm 106:19–20, 21–22, 23; John 5:31–47.*

Friday, March 31

A Recompense of Holiness

In today's readings, we hear that the wicked not only are blinded by their evil ways but that they do not know how to recognize God's holiness in their midst. In our fast-paced world, we often miss holiness as well. Consider how holiness has been apparent in, perhaps, a kind word from a store clerk, a gentle hand holding you back from oncoming traffic, or a child putting away the dishes without being asked. How have you let your holiness shine forth to others? *Today's Readings: Wisdom 2:1a, 12–22; Psalm 34:17–18, 19–20, 21 and 23; John 7:1–2, 10, 25–30.*

Saturday, April 1

Opening Ourselves to Others

In today's Gospel, some are not open to Christ because they have a preconceived idea of who the Messiah will be. Lent is a time for penitence and introspection. We need to consider how often we jump to conclusions about someone without first discovering who they are. The readings today remind us to hear people's stories and consider their situations and experiences. Doing so will open us to their goodness. *Today's Readings: Jeremiah 11:18–20; Psalm 7:2–3, 9bc–10, 11–12; John 7:40–53.*

