

4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Lent  
March 22, 2020  
“The Light of Faith”

1 Sam 16:1...13  
Eph 5:8-14  
Jn 9:1...38

My Brothers and Sisters in the Lord –

Most of us have heard the sarcastic statement that is applied to those who refuse to change their beliefs or behavior:

“Don’t confuse me with facts – my mind is already made up!”

One of the tendencies that most people have is to remain steadfast in whatever seems to have worked for them in the past. We are creatures of habit. We get used to a comfortable routine – We resist those things which are unsettling – And this is probably as it should be. Because not every new thing is going to work. Moreover, new ways of thinking can sometimes be far from beneficial and even destructive for ourselves or for the world.

However, because of our natural resistance to most change, we can also resist or refuse something that God asks of us – something truly for our benefit or for the world! The scriptures for today have much to say in this regard.

King Saul had disobeyed God. He was no longer fit to be the leader of the Chosen People. God had a different plan, which Saul would resist – and the prophet Samuel understood this. It was for this reason that Samuel journeyed to Bethlehem on the pretext of offering a special sacrifice in that place.

Once there, Samuel discovered that none of the sons that Jesse presented were God’s choice. Ultimately, that choice was David, despite his youth and seeming lack of experience. However, we are told that when anointed, the Holy Spirit rushed upon David – the same Spirit of God that would sustain David throughout his career!

In the Gospel, Jesus heals a man who had been blind from his birth. At that time, the common belief was that any disability was because of sinfulness. Either the man's parents were being punished for their sins – or the infant had, somehow, sinned and offended God.

However, Jesus said that this belief was unfounded. Moreover, Jesus cured the man and demonstrated that not all of Jewish practice was unchangeable! Jesus healed on the Sabbath by making clay and applying it over the man's closed eyes!

Sadly, the blindness and the hardheartedness of the Pharisees kept them from seeing the real purpose that was behind the Sabbath law of rest. It was to worship God and let the body be healed with the rest needed after a week of hard work. But what was far worse, was that the Jewish leadership could not accept that Jesus was sent by God to establish a whole new way of living and believing. The Lord was a God of mercy and love. He was gracious and forgiving. He had even sent His Son into the world to teach us how to become children of God ourselves!

Unfortunately, most of the world, today, continues to be in a great darkness of soul and spirit. We deny truth; we resist goodness; we substitute the grotesque for the truly beautiful. We are closed to God and to the ways of God. Because we cannot prove what we believe due to our inherent faith, many – perhaps most – contend that we have been duped and are to be pitied. But it really is the other way around – for they are the unfortunate ones! We have the Holy Spirit to enlighten us and to see what others refuse to see – to trust where they have no hope – to be secure when the world is in disarray and falling apart!

St. Paul experienced all that we have – and even more. He tells us that, like him, we were once in darkness, but now we are light in the Lord. Consequently, we must live as children of the light. In doing so, we will bring goodness, rightness, and truth to everything and to everyone in our sphere of influence.

Brothers and Sisters, we are truly blessed to live during the time after the coming of Jesus to the world – For Jesus is the Light of the World! Jesus, alone, gives meaning to life – and insight into the chaotic world in which we live. Jesus, alone, shows us how to rise above the evil and sin of the culture and the world, and remain steadfast in our obedience to God, our Father.

So, let us pray, today, that we truly become children of the light – May we open ourselves to all that God asks – And may we, somehow, see and understand what others refuse to accept or believe!

Amen.

March 22, 2020

Msgr. Russell G. Terra