

March 22, 2020 PM
Fourth Sunday of Lent

Activity for today:

- Read the daily readings
- Watch Sunday Mass on a Facebook Live event or on EWTN TV Channel
- Call a friend or family member who you haven't spoken with in awhile.
- Read Fr. Brian's homily
- If you have any comments on what you would like to see on our website, please comment at the bottom of this page.

JOHN 9:1-41
Healing a blind man

Fr. Brian's Sunday Mass Homily

Eyesight is so precious. I am so thankful to Nancy Glover for streaming this celebration of the holy Eucharist this morning, because for our community I think just seeing a familiar sanctuary and nearby mass offered this morning can be a great comfort and an anchoring light to clarify our vision during these uncertain times. Celebrating together highlights our connection in faith to the greater body of believers in Christ, one another, and that we are all united in prayerful solidarity. I pray for you and we all pray for one another, through this time of viral pandemic. I have placed our parish St Anthony/& Pius directories near the tabernacle through the week as a sign of us all being drawn near in Christ's presence. Faith opens our eyes and so in this past week especially, we have had our eyes opened to the infrastructure of our society, all of those jobs and persons we rely on and are often or always unseen..... Today we pray for those standing in front of us, the frontline in this pandemic, our healthcare workers, and at home caregivers to the sick who are stepping away from routines to help and tend to others in need. Also, our community service providers-fire, emt, police, health depts, and our private sector business people, such as clerks, cashiers, stockers, delivery people (keep in mind our truckers-every bit of food & 70% goods sold every day are handed off to us by truckers We pray for you, your families who share in your sacrifice, for your health. We see you or maybe haven't before now, but now we do and we thank you and pray for you.

Reflect upon our gospel of this man born blind, healed-eyes opened. Have you ever experienced temporary blindness? Thrown into world of darkness.....

One time I was, I remember once as a kid playing tackle football with neighbors at the corner lot, and I was trying to intercept a pass over a guy I was covering, and I jumped up reaching out when the receiver Glenn below me jumped up too but right in front of me, and I came down, he was leaping up, to crash the top of his head, into the right side of face Yes, Owwwww, to the ground I went and grabbed my face. The pain I don't think was terrible, but as I got up...everything was dark, I lowered my hand and couldn't see; for whatever reason; psychological shock or reaction to trauma, but even my other eye was squinting bad.... Maybe I poked my other eye out of fear grabbing upward. And as I instinctively raced my hand up to my eyes and cheeks, then I felt what scared me to death (then I didn't want to open my eyes- before we left to go to Mercy Emergency Room, my dad and mom said not for me to look into the mirror-that's bad). I felt a huge bump/knot on cheek bone and big circle of swelling all on my face. The bump made me feel like my eye had been knocked out busted spilled into cheek cavity.... In the end I lost sight only because it swelled shut, I guess if there is any light I that bad experience, it was what I was called by friends, "Hey, Shiner" , for a couple weeks, But it woke me up to how precious our eyes are!

In our gospel, John 9:1-41, there is a lot of blindness going around. The main figure is the actual man, born blind. His healing & eye-opening is the most obvious and the easiest one to handle. As he says, "I was blind, but now I see" And it is all because of Jesus, that is the key to all of this: If you want to see, Jesus is the one, to open eyes, so go to Him-call on Him.

But in such a twist, it seems the only person who truly sees (eyes wide open) in this gospel is the one who is completely blind (from birth). Everyone else is blind in some way. This universal blindness is encapsulated in the self-defensive Pharisees at the end of story verses 40-41 "Surely we are not also blind, are we?" (It might be said, "if you have to ask, you are") Jesus responded, "If you were blind, you would have no sin; but now you are saying, 'We see,' so your sin remains." Jesus delivers the diagnosis. In their arrogance the Pharisees claim to see-know all in religious matters, they are blind in their sin. Like the self-proclaimed expert who says, "I know more than anybody" Might want to run, or don't run if blind, ease away, from that person. So the 1) blind man, the 2) Pharisees, 3) the crowd doesn't escape blindness, because when the question is raised about whether the blind man was really the same man everyone always saw begging in public, verse 9 says that "Some said, 'It is,' but others said, "No, he just looks like him." So they don't know really what he looks like (they are blind by choice there- as we will hear in the rich man and Lazarus story (Luke 16:19-31) who chooses no to see poor Lazarus). The crowd says 'We don't see a problem-our responsibility' which

reminds me of the proverbial kid who doesn't take care of his own puppy and excuses ignoring cleaning up after its mess, by saying 'I don't see any puppy poo over there on ground'. But here, even 4) the parents don't escape blindness, because when they are asked about the truth of their son's healing, they push away and claim not to know anything about it. (due to the threat of the Pharisees over them...because anyone claiming Christ as the messiah, was rejected/expelled from synagogue). In verse 21, the parents claim their son (he is ours) but in verse 21 say "**We do not know how he sees now, nor do we know who** opened his eyes. Ask him.." They are blind to its cause. The Pharisees expose their blindness, several times. I am not picking at, poking the Pharisees in the eye, they do that themselves. Again in verse 29, when they are cleverly asked by the blind what they think of Jesus as Savior, they respond, "We do not know where this one is from." But to bring in one more blind group, 5) you may realize that I haven't said anything about the apostles yet, (the man, the parents, the crowd and of course the Pharisees are blind (each his or her own way), But do the apostles get a pass here? NO. Even in their group there is blindness. Just back in Chapter 6, some followers of Jesus had left him, over his 'Bread of Life' teaching. Back there, Jesus had asked Peter point blank (6:67-68) "Do you also want to leave?" and Peter answered humbly and admitted his own blindness, "**Master, to whom shall we go?** You have the words of eternal life." That is something for us all to reflect on: for us all to see. We all suffer blindness. Good disciples of Jesus humbly, say, "I can't see, Lord- open my eyes" If we are in the dark, we must ask for and seek the light. Maybe as proof of all human nature being blind in degrees or completely, would be a reference back to God's great act of creation Genesis 1:3, where God's first word is 'Let there be light'. We know that with anything broke, hurt or not working, the first question asked is always 'Can you fix it?'. And we always hear, "Yes, maybe, but I have got to see it first" We say, "Turn a brighter light on, let me take a look, put on magnifying glasses, let's get a scan of it, or send me a screen shot."

So in our blindness, we have to 'go to light' Jesus in John 8:12, tells us "I am the light of world". To have our eyes opened to see clearly, we need Jesus. So, let's turn to him, to see. I love to read, and the best place to read is **directly under the light**. So let's together sit under Christ's light every day this Lent. Give Jesus time each day (*under his Son Lamp?*) for our peace, our healing, & our strength.

Send Comments & Suggestions

At the bottom of the "Daily Information" page, send a comment or suggestion on what you would like to see on our website. We hope we can improve on how we are serving you.