

Church of the Divine Love
FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT
MARCH 15, 2026 10:15 A.M.
HOLY EUCHARIST, RITE II

A Morning Prayer

A PENITENTIAL ORDER

Processional Hymn #493 - **O for a thousand tongues to sing**

Opening Acclamation For Lent page 351

The Decalogue page 350

The Confession page 353

THE WORD OF GOD

_ Kyrie page 356

Collect for 4 Lent page 219

First Lesson: **1 Samuel 16:1-13** (*pages 248 in the Bible*)

Psalm 23 page 612

Second Lesson: **Ephesians 5:8-14** (*page 1019*)

Gradual Hymn #143 - **The glory of these forty days**

Gospel: **John 9:1-41** (*page 932*)

Sermon – The Rev. Jean Lenord Quatorze

The Nicene Creed page 358

Prayers of the People, Form VI page 392

The Peace

Welcome and Announcements

THE HOLY COMMUNION

Offertory Hymn #440 - **Blessed Jesus, at thy word**

Doxology (sung)

The Great Thanksgiving:

Eucharistic Prayer A page 361

Sanctus (S-130 in hymnal)

Hymn during Consecration (on facing page)

The Lord's Prayer page 364

The Breaking of the Bread, Anthem & Prayer page 337

Communion Hymn #465 - **Eternal light, shine in my heart**

Post Communion Prayer page 365

Prayer for Peace page 815

Prayer for the Parish page 817

Prayer of St. Francis page 833

Dismissal Hymn #663, vs. 1,2,5 - **The Lord my God**

Dismissal

Sermon Sunday March 15, 2026

1 Samuel 16:1-13; Psalm 23; Ephesians 5: 8-14; John 9:1-41.

Sisters and brothers in Christ, Jesus said, "I came into this world for judgment so that those who do not see may see, and those who do see may become blind." Some of the Pharisees near him heard this and said to him, "Surely we are not blind, are we?" Jesus said to them, "If you were blind, you would not have sin. But now that you say, 'We see,' your sin remains.

They all looked at him but they never saw him. He was the blind guy. Born that way. Day after day he sat and begged. They looked. They walked by. They wondered. But they never saw. He had never seen their faces until today. He had never seen his own face, his parents' faces, a sunrise, the stars, his home, a smile until today. Before today it was as if he didn't even exist. He was a life waiting to be born, a light waiting to shine, a word waiting to be spoken. Today he became a new creation, he was enlightened, he became a living testimony to the Son of Man but they still don't see him. For some reason they are unable to see him. The disciples look at him and see a theological question, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" Their vision is distorted by the popular belief that suffering

is caused by sin and you get what you deserve. The neighbors looked but couldn't see past the image of the way things had always been, a blind man sitting and begging. It's all he had ever known. It's all they had ever known. Blinded by disbelief they keep asking him, "How were your eyes opened?"

Two times the religious leaders call him in. Two times they interrogate him. Two times he gives glory to God. They cannot see the prophet, the man from God, that this formerly blind man now sees. They cannot see the new life, the new man, the new creation that bears testimony to the man from God. Two times they turn a blind eye to this man and his God. No one, as the saying goes, is more blind than he or she who chooses not to see. They have chosen power, rules, and boundaries over the truth and their eyes have grown dim. Even this man's own parents' distance themselves from him. They can talk about their blind son but not about their seeing son. To see him, the enlightened son, meant they would have to tell the story. "We do not know how it is that now he sees, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself." They deny what is right before their eyes. Fear does that. Fear keeps us from seeing a larger reality, from living with a larger vision. So, we live with tunnel vision only seeing that one thing that we most fear.

They all looked but none saw him. If they saw him, they would have to confront their own blindness. This man blind from birth is not just a single individual, he is every man, every woman. The only difference between him and all the others in today's gospel is that he knows he is blind. Until we know we are blind we can never see with new eyes. "Surely we are not blind, are we?" Blindness is not about the quality of our vision or the condition of our eyes. It is not about the darkness around us but, rather, the darkness within us. How we see others, what we see in the world, the way we see life is less about the objects of our seeing and more about ourselves. We do not see God, people, things, or circumstances as they are but as we are. Until our eyes are opened by Christ our seeing is really just a projection of ourselves onto the world. What we see and how we see manifest our inner world. They describe and point to the fears, attachments, and beliefs within us. If we wish to see God, life, and others as they really are then we must attend to what is going on within us. True seeing begins in the heart not the eyes. We must begin to acknowledge the fears, attachments, and beliefs that live within us and how they have impaired our vision.

Think about a time when you were scared, really scared. Maybe it was about your marriage, your job, the illness of loved one. That fear had a way of blinding you. Fear rivets our attention on that thing we fear to the exclusion of everything else around us. That one thing is all we can think about, all that we can see. Fear narrows our world view and our vision becomes myopic, nearsighted to the point of exclusion. Attachments are those things or people we think we must have to be happy. We can't imagine life without them. We have convinced ourselves that our very existence in some way depends on them. The Bible calls them idols. Modern society calls them addictions. Regardless, we will inevitably look for and see only that which fosters and affirms our attachments and will turn a blind eye toward anything that threatens them. Our vision becomes selective.

We have probably all met someone who is so fanatical in his or her beliefs that he or she cannot see

another point of view. He cannot look at any other possibility. She refuses to see other ways but her own. Not only have we met these people too often we are these people. We all have certain beliefs to which we cling. They offer the illusion of stability and security. So, we no longer live in the real world, God's world, but a world that we have created in our head. The inner darkness of our fears, attachments, and beliefs is what keeps us from seeing. They cover our eyes like the mud on the eyes of the man born blind. In placing mud on the blind man's eyes Jesus is holding before him the reality of his blindness. He wears thick black lenses of fear, attachments, and beliefs. We all do. Those who know this are sent to wash in the pool, to be re-created, and to see with new eyes. Once they were darkness but now in the Lord, they are light. The rest will continue looking but never see, their faces caked with mud.

Don't just look around. Look within. What do you see? How do you see? Where is the mud of darkness in your life? Name that reality. Acknowledge it and then go wash. The mud of darkness always gives way to the light of Christ. Love lies at the heart of Jesus' judgment. With open eyes he sees in us more beauty, more goodness, more holiness, than we often see in ourselves and each other. His judgment is intended to open our eyes to see anew; a new life, a new world, and new possibilities. What we often don't understand is that his judgment is in our favor and for our good even when it doesn't feel that way. He is a prophet who has come into this world for judgment. **Amen.**

Enclosed are Easter flower memorial envelopes. Please return by Palm Sunday.

Make checks payable to Church of the Divine Love Altar Guild.

4 LENT	10:15 AM	HOLY EUCHARIST RITE II COFFEE HOUR FOLLOWS
MONDAY	8:00 PM	AA MEETING
WEDNESDAY	7:00 PM	AL-ANON MEETING
THURSDAY	10AM-2PM	THRIFT SHOP
SATURDAY	10AM-2PM	THRIFT SHOP
5 LENT	10:15 AM	HOLY EUCHARIST, RITE II COFFEE HOUR FOLLOWS
	11:15 AM	VESTRY MEETING

MARCH 29th - SUNDAY OF THE PASSION:PALM SUNDAY

Following the service there will be a celebration to honor and thank Fr. Jean for his devotion to our parish and church family.

	Today	Next Week
Eucharistic Minister	Jess Berbeck	Dana Kenn
Coffee Hour	Nolans	Judy Golden

SUPPORT THE FOOD BANK, DROP OFF IN THE KITCHEN

PARISH PRAYER LIST

Loving God, comfort and heal all those who suffer in body, mind or spirit. Give them courage and hope in their troubles and bring them the joy of your salvation. Especially we remember before you:

Barbara Curran	Betty Curley	Martin
Bob Curley	Steve Curley	Joseph
Chris Dickson	John Roccoo	Warren
John Mulligan	Marjorie Guerrier	Bobby
Scottie Credendino	Michael	Ryan
Sister Eddie	Bernie Walther	Celeste

Beverly Noel	Phil Ryder	Jill
Anthony Paribello	Jonathan	Aika
Donna Amundsen	Kate Jones	Jan
Timothy Treasure	Vincent & Barbara	Sandy
Mary & Family	Wendy	Jay
Gladys Hadija	Sophia	Aidan
Michael & Family	Donna A	Mo
Michelle & Family	Christopher	Annie
Moises Parra	Misael Varas	Cary
Samantha		

All people and countries suffering from violence, hatred and natural disasters.
The homeless and food insecure.

Help us speak words of encouragement and offer deeds of kindness to them.
Bring us, with them, into the unending joy of your kingdom. Amen.

To add or make changes to the prayer list during the week,
email Janet Croft at jmc220@optonline.net.

