

The Fourth Sunday of Lent
Homily ~ April 3, 2011
8 and 10 a.m., 12 Noon Liturgies

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St. John the Evangelist Parish
Davison, Michigan

A blind man sees, one who has never seen the light of day, the colors of trees, the faces of family and friends, the very things that you and I see every day. Thanks to Jesus, the blind man is treated with mud pies which, when washed off in the Pool of Siloam, empowers eyesight. It empowers eyesight he had never dreamed possible. Even a casual read of the story leaves one asking: “What’s happening here? Our inquiring minds want to know.”

Like us, the authorities are trying to pick this miracle apart. The blind man, who now sees, sticks to one single statement: “I once was blind, but now I see.” Nothing really matters. He knew he had been helped and that made all the difference.

Friends, there are none so blind as those who will not see. There is physical blindness and there is spiritual blindness. Helen Keller, who was blind since the age of nineteen months, once said, “The worst thing that can befall a person is not to lose sight, but to lose your vision.”

A mother of five lost her sight through illness. She struggled with her blindness. She had always been self-sufficient, doing things for herself. Now she had to depend on other people to do the things for her. After losing her sight, she began to notice things around her that she had never noticed before.

There was a young man who had been born blind who stood on the street corner. When she had her sight, she never paid any attention to him, but now that she could not see, she spoke to him and eventually became his friend. She discovered that he’d never had a birthday party, so she baked him a cake and organized a party. He blew out the candles he couldn’t see. He was delirious with joy. For the first time in a long time, the newly blinded person felt so happy. She had come from that person who was into herself to someone whose eyes had been opened to see a need and done something about it. Formerly, even though she could see, she was blind—blind to the needs of others. But now she could see.

After she gave the blind man a birthday party, he met a blind girl and was beginning to fall in love with her when someone with sight told him that she was awfully unattractive. As a result, he stopped seeing her. He had been seeing fine until some so-called seeing person misguided him.

Friends, there are two kinds of blindness—one of the eyes; the other of the heart. Not only did Jesus open the man’s eyes so he could see, he opened the eyes of his heart so he could believe.

When Jesus heard how the healed man was grilled by the Pharisees, Jesus sought out the man and asked him, “*Do you believe in the Son of Man?*” The man replied, “*Tell me, so that I may believe in him.*” Then came the moment of truth. Jesus said to him, “*You have seen him and the one speaking with you is he!*”

The man then knelt before him, and with his whole being said, “*Lord, I do believe. I see.*” This man was given eyesight but now sees much more. Now he is able to see through the eyes of faith.

The message is clear. Not only to the people of Jesus’ day, but to us as well. We need to see not just with our eyes but with our hearts.

Jesus helps people to see. He helps people see their families and friends in new ways. Jesus helps people see opportunities for improving their lives. Jesus makes it possible for people to see God. He can help you and me see things we never saw before. Jesus saw the blind man. Jesus healed the blind man, and Jesus can heal you and me from our *blindness* as well.

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