

Fourth Sunday of Lent A - "Lord, that I may see"

Mar 15, 2026.

All of today's readings are about light and darkness, blindness and sight, seeing without really seeing and the inability to see one's own blindness. We can also see the readings are overflowing with sacramental signs as there are many catechumens preparing to receive the sacraments in our Church during the season of Lent. The readings for this fourth Sunday of Lent have been specifically chosen to help prepare the catechumens for the Easter Vigil. In the first reading, David is anointed with oil by Samuel, marking him as chosen by God for a special mission. David was chosen because God sees his heart. It is a call to look beyond appearances. Most of us judge others based on what we see and hear on the outside. It's time for us to search the heart. In the Psalm, the Lord, as the Good Shepherd, cares for his flock. With oil, he anoints the heads of his followers. This is symbolic of the oil we receive at our confirmation or when we are sick. In the second reading, Paul tells us that we have been brought out of darkness and made children of light. In the Gospel, a man born blind is healed by Jesus, who brings sight to his eyes in a way that is filled with sacramental imagery, especially that of baptism. In the Christian sacrament of baptism, a person is ushered into the life of Christ and salvation. From antiquity, this rite of entrance has been full of biblical symbolism. Ancient writings from the early church tell us that a Catechumen went through various stages, such as a presentation before the bishop, a naming, a signing with the Cross, rejections of sin and Satan, pronouncements of faith, water being blessed and poured, and anointing with oils, to name a few. Just as David has been marked for a special mission by God, all Christians have been "marked" as well. In fact, we "mark" ourselves all the time! We do this with the sign the cross. We should be proud of carrying on our souls this indelible mark of Christ. As we follow Christ into his public ministry and stand with him before the world, let us proudly stand publicly as men and women of faith. We are the sheep of his flock. Today, let us be proud of the name Christian.

Pope Leo XIV said that we have to be careful of "a complacent faith that is satisfied with the outward observance of the law but incapable of feeling and acting with the same merciful compassion as God." In the story of the healing of the blind man on the Sabbath, the Pharisees challenged Jesus and opposed to what Christ was doing. But, the Holy Father says, "If Christ shows us the face of a compassionate God, then to believe in him and to be his disciples means allowing ourselves to be changed and to take on his same feelings. It means learning to have a heart that is moved, eyes that see and do not look away, hands that help others and soothe their wounds, shoulders that bear the burden of those in need. (-Pope Leo XIV, Homily, July 13th, 2025). Somehow, the Pharisees in the Gospel today are against the healing Jesus performs. They don't seem to care about the good of another or about helping the poor. Rather, the rules about the Sabbath seem to be more important to them. The words of Pope Leo, who has spent much of his life helping the poor in Latin America, carry a true weight to them. Being a Christian will mean being a good and decent human being on a very human and social level. If not, a Christian is a hypocrite and can't be considered a follower of Christ on any real level. There is a spiritual blindness which comes from closing the windows of the soul and putting up the shutters in order to keep out Jesus who is the light of the world.

The gospel about the blind man healed by Jesus reminds us that we were all born blind and were groping in spiritual darkness until at baptism we began our journey of faith in the likeness of Christ. The miracle challenges the "culture of prejudice" that marginalizes the sick or disabled. Jesus using mud to heal the blind is a symbolic act of "new creation". The blind man is a representative of all humanity, created to know God but often blinded by sin, in need of a "new light" of the life we receive at baptism which gives us the power to bring Christ to everything we do and to every person we meet. This miracle is not just a physical healing but a symbol of overcoming "inner blindness". Following the healing of his blindness, the man progresses from knowing Jesus' name to recognizing him as a prophet, and finally to worshipping him as the Son of Man. This journey is a model for all Christians to move from being "beggars" (in need of salvation) to disciples who follow Jesus. While the blind man gradually comes to the light of faith, others—specifically the doctors of the law—sink deeper into their own blindness due to pride and rigid adherence to rules.

The saving and healing work of Christ continues in the Church today. What happens in the Old Testament and the New Testament has spilled over into the life of the Church and into the lives of the Christian faithful. Each Christian participates in the salvation and healing work of Christ, and this happens through the sacraments. These are seven gifts that Jesus bestowed on the Church in order to continue the saving events of salvation throughout the duration of time. The Bible tells us about the many promises that God makes to Israel and how they are all fulfilled in the New Testament. And what's more, the promises are still continuing today through the Church and the Sacraments. The promises of God and their fulfillment in Christ flow into the daily life of a Christian by sacramental grace. The sacraments carry on the mystery of Christ today. We should cherish these great mysteries of the faith. As we journey to Easter, let us renew our thanksgiving and appreciation for the sacraments we have received in our lives.

Pope Francis in his 2023 reflection on this gospel linked the healing to the Church's mission to "wash away the mud from our eyes" through listening to one another, so we can see the graced people around us. He said the Church is like a field hospital and "mud" is a tool of transformation. It symbolizes God's work in and through our human, broken, and earthly condition. It's an invitation to "see with the heart". The Pope urges Christians to see the world and their brothers/sisters through God's gaze.

Jesus said, "I am the light of the world". Light is the symbol of life with Christ and darkness is the religious image for sinfulness, shameful deeds and unbelief. Each of us is meant to be a beacon of light showing Christ to others: how to live and giving direction to follow Christ by our good example. Sometimes, we are the only gospel people get to read. Having been called to walk as children of the light we must keep praying: "Lord, that I may see."