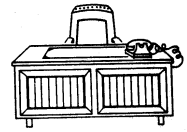


## 4th Sunday of Lent

March 19, 2023



From the Desk of  
Fr. Romanus

**Dear Parishioners,**

Sunday Reflection:

The miraculous healing of the man born blind took place on a Sabbath, near the pool of Siloam in Jerusalem. It reflected the prevalent rabbinic teaching that saw correlation between sin and sickness. Jesus refuted that assumption and asserted that the blind man's condition was meant for the manifestation of God's glory, not punishment for personal sin. The emphasis is not so much on the miracle but on Jesus' ability to meet human needs.

The opposition claimed that the man was faking it and not really blind. Therefore, he could not have been healed by Jesus. The man's parents were compelled to testify that the man was blind from birth. The opposition claimed that Jesus was a sinner by repeatedly violating the Sabbath law and could not have possibly performed the miracle.

The Pharisees had a difficult time refuting the blind man's account of his personal experience of healing. To the ridiculous idea that Jesus was a sinner incapable of performing such miracles, the blind man retorted: "If he is a sinner, I do not know. One thing I do know is that I was blind and now I see." (9:25). Fr. Robert Barron (now Auxiliary Bishop of Los Angeles) wrote a book based on this passage and entitled, "And Now I See." In the book, Fr. Barron describes Christianity as a way of seeing, and speaks about the Christian way of life as being rooted in the transformation of vision. Obviously, the blind man in our story experienced the transformation of vision, whereas the Pharisees remained blind. Christianity is essentially about looking at the world with different lens and able to see clearly what others miss.

Unable to convince the blind man to recant his miracle story, the Pharisees got rid of him. They threw him out of the synagogue and out of the community. It is a reminder that faith and persecution often go hand in hand, but God is always there with his reassuring presence. Thus, after the man's expulsion, Jesus came looking for him and led him to a deeper profession of faith.

The whole passage underscores two types of blindness, physical and spiritual. While the man in our story was physically blind, he had a distinctively clear spiritual vision. On the contrary, the Pharisees who claimed to see perfectly were spiritually blind. When some of the Pharisees in his company asked if he also considered them blind, Jesus responded, "If you were blind, you would have no sin; but now you are saying, 'We see,' so your sin remains." Therefore, the issue is not whether one is blind, but whether the person is open to the transformation of vision through an encounter with Jesus, the true light of the world.

Have a great week!

*Fr. Romanus*