

Fourth Sunday of Lent A2026

The fourth Sunday of Lent is dominated by the healing of the man born blind. The starting point of the healing is the question Jesus' disciples asked him about who had sinned for him to be born this way, his parents or himself.

That question goes in the line of popular belief, defended even today by some people, that God rewards the good and punishes the bad ones even in this world. Therefore, diseases and misfortunes are a consequence of sin

In his answers, our Lord opposes this popular belief with the reality of God's mystery that transcends human imagination. In fact, there is a mystery that surrounds the life of each one of us we cannot fully understand. In the display of this mystery, God's goodness in his creation prevails over the evil. Moreover, God has his time to intervene and put an end to the misery and the misfortune of his creation.

In that perspective, every circumstance of our life becomes an opportunity for God to let his glory shine. What matters the most is not the cause of our disease or misfortune, but what God can do in order to show his glory upon us and around us. Even if it happens that we are not physically healed, God can grant us a spiritual healing so that we cope with our sickness. That has been true in the lives of many people who have experienced God's grace and peace within themselves in the worst of their health condition.

When as Christians we help those in need, pain and suffering, we show to them God's glory and the compassionate face of the Father. That is why the appeal of Lent is that we take advantage of this wonderful time of prayer and fasting to do good to others through almsgiving. This is the appropriate time to do so, and not tomorrow. We have to take advantage of the light of the day and work and have our rest at night.

Once our Lord has rejected the connection between sin and suffering, then he could heal the blind man. In the process of the healing, it is remarkable that our Lord mixes his saliva with the clay and anoints the eyes of the blind with the recommendation to go and wash his face. This is a clear allusion to the sacrament of baptism with its use of water and the anointment with the holy oil.

That is why the healing of the blind man reminds us that God heals us through the sacraments we receive within the Church. Each sacrament is, in its own way, a manifestation of God's power through which he shows us his mercy and his forgiveness in order to spiritually heal us.

The problem is always that of knowing if we really recognize our Lord's healing power or not. Two categories of people in today's Gospel did not do so, namely the Pharisees and the parents of the healed man. In fact, the Pharisees did not believe at first that the healed man was born blind. When they could not resist the truth that our Lord healed him, they considered him as a fake prophet, because he performed the miracle on a Sabbath day. And yet, what our Lord has done was a wonderful work that gives glory to God. That is why they remained in their blindness despite that they had eyes to see.

Plus, as they could not destroy the truth of the healed man standing there in their presence, the Pharisees turned bitter and insulting. This episode teaches us that we can easily have differences with people. But, when it develops into insult and abuse, it ceases to be an argument and becomes a contest in bitterness. In that case, what it proves to be is just that our case is weak and we are weak people.

Like the Pharisees, the parents of the blind man were afraid to acknowledge publicly the healing of their son as coming from Jesus. Here we see how fear can be paralyzing even in the presence of the truth. That is why Lent is an invitation to be courageous, an appeal to stand up and tell the truth of Jesus.

Very different is the attitude of the healed man who recognizes our Lord as his savior and Lord. Quite striking also is the fact that our Lord appears only in the beginning of the story and at the end. He does so in order to let the faith of the blind man grow among the difficulties of life.

By doing so, our Lord teaches us that we have to grow in our faith and give witness to him amid the conflicts and hardships of life. The outcome of such a process in today's Gospel is paradoxical. In the beginning, only one was blind while all others were seeing. In the end, all others were blind while only one could see that Jesus was more than a prophet, the Lord.

We pray that the Lord may give us the courage to bear witness to him in the uncertainties of this world. May the time of Lent be for each one of us an opportunity to grow in faith! Amen.

1 Samuel 16: 1b, 6-7, 10-13a; Ephesians 5: 8-14; John 9: 1-41



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Contact: www.mbala.org

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