

# Living the Word

MEDITATING ON THE SUNDAY GOSPEL

4th Sunday of Lent Year A

A resource for personal, family  
and community prayer.

“...so that the **works of God** might be displayed in him.”

*Gospel: John 9:1-3, 6-9, 13-17, 34-38*

(Shorter version)

<sup>1</sup>As Jesus went along he saw a man who had been blind from birth. <sup>2</sup>His disciples asked him, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, for him to have been born blind?” <sup>3</sup>“Neither he nor his parents sinned,” Jesus answered. “He was born blind so that the works of God might be displayed in him.” <sup>6</sup>Having said this, he spat on the ground, made a paste with the spittle, put this over the eyes of the blind man <sup>7</sup>and said to him, “Go and wash in the pool of Siloam,” (a name which means ‘sent’). So the blind man went off and washed himself and came away with his sight restored. <sup>8</sup>His neighbours and people who had earlier seen him begging said, “Isn’t this the man who use to sit and

*You are invited to read the Gospel passage attentively, respectfully and reverently as a gift of God.*



beg?” <sup>9</sup>Some said, “Yes, he is the same one.” Others said, “No, he only looks like him.” The man himself said, “I am the man.” <sup>13</sup>They brought the man who had been blind to the Pharisees.

<sup>14</sup>It had been the Sabbath day when Jesus made the paste and opened the man’s eyes, <sup>15</sup>so when the Pharisees asked him how he had come to see, he said, “He put a paste on my eyes and I washed and I can see.” <sup>16</sup>Then some of the Pharisees said, “This man cannot

be from God: he does not keep the Sabbath.” Others said, “How could a sinner produce signs like this?” And there was disagreement among them. <sup>17</sup>So they spoke to the blind man again. “What have you to say about him yourself, now that he has opened your eyes?” “He is a Prophet,” replied the man. <sup>34</sup>“Are you trying to teach us,” they replied, “and you a sinner through and through, since you were born!” And they drove him away.

<sup>35</sup>Jesus heard that they had driven him away, and when he found him, he said to him, “Do you believe in the Son of Man?” <sup>36</sup>“Sir,” the man replied, “tell me who he is so that I might believe in him.” <sup>37</sup>Jesus said, “You are looking at him. He is speaking to you.” <sup>38</sup>The man said, “Lord, I believe,” and worshipped him.

## Reading

The Jews at that time regarded “blindness” as a punishment for sin, either of the man himself or his parents, but Jesus takes a radically different view of the blind person: “neither he nor his parents sinned. He was born blind so that the works of God might be displayed in him.”

The account of the healing of the blind person is told with the ritual of baptism in mind. Lent is the season when many adults journey towards Easter baptism – a sacrament through which their eyes are opened to a new seeing of God’s presence at work in their lives, and the call to follow him more closely.

While the pharisees descend into greater darkness and blindness the “blind man” rises to a deeper and fuller seeing of who Jesus truly is- the presence of God among us.

## Recognising

**You are invited to meditate on the passage, or any part of it, by letting it speak to your life experience until you feel to say “I recognise this passage.”**

**v3. “So that the works of God might be displayed in him.”**

Can you enter into the experience of Jesus in the passage by recognizing those who see goodness in others and their potential for greatness, while some can only see limitations and weakness?

**v6. “He made a paste...and daubed his eyes.”**

Can you recognise Jesus people, those who draw close to the blind, disabled and the afflicted and marginalised in our society- setting them free and empowering them to realise their full potential?

**v9. “I am the man.”**

Can you recognize someone who has made a journey from sickness to health, from disability to new strength, from lack of knowledge to new understanding, and has now been filled with a profound sense of gratitude, new self-confidence and courage?

**v16. “This man cannot be from God, he doesn’t keep the Sabbath.”**

Can you enter into the experience of the Pharisees by recognizing the blind spots of prejudice and self-righteousness in your own life which prevent you from seeing the good in others?

## *Responding*

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**Having recognised God’s presence in life, you are invited to **respond** in your own words, in prayer (thanksgiving, repentance and petition).**

Lord, thank you for the “limitations” and “disabilities” that once caused me so much emotional and psychological pain. Through friendship with your son Jesus I now see how I have grown through these challenges and that I am a better person today because of them. Thank you, Father, for those friends and family members who, through their wisdom and love, have helped me come to greater self-acceptance, inner-freedom and peace.

Lord, I ask forgiveness for the times I languished in the darkness of doubt, disbelief and discouragement as I couldn’t see beyond my limitations. I am sorry for the failure to accept my life as your gift – and the missed opportunities of letting “your works be displayed in me”.

Lord, help me to recognise that my weaknesses and limitations can provide an opportunity for you to manifest your presence and work in my life. Help me to trust that you have the power to create something beautiful out of the broken pieces if only I would allow you to come near-“make a paste with the spittle, put this over my eyes”- and do what you ask of me.

## *Resting*

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You are invited to enter deep prayer by simply **resting** your heart in God’s presence (Contemplative moment). The quiet repetition of a word or phrase from the passage might help you on this journey into greater silence and stillness, e.g. “**Lord, I believe**”.

## *Reflecting*

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**From your journey with this passage, you are now invited to **reflect**, and put into your own words, any new insights or understanding that you have received (Wisdom moment).**

From your journey with this passage, what new insight has been given to you into the meaning of prejudice or narrow mindedness, liberation and true healing?

**Blindness to the truth leaves us all in the dark.**



# Children

## *Reading*

Jesus takes the initiative to do good and to improve the life of a man who has been blind from birth. Jesus sees the opportunity and acts without hesitation. Jesus faces criticism from the religious leaders for doing good on a day of rest. Jesus responds by claiming that the blind man can now see the glory of God. However, the religious leaders continue to be blind to the truth that God requires us to do good rather than questioning who deserves goodness or when it should be shown.

## *Recognising*

Can you remember a time when you noticed someone in need at home, in school, at your sports club, and you seized the opportunity to do good without hesitation?

Can you remember a time when you were in need and a 'Jesus person' stepped out of the crowd to help you without even knowing you?

## *Responding*

Father, I thank you for opening my eyes to the knowledge that every person is your

beloved child and it is always the right time to do good so that others may experience your love through me.

Father, I am sorry for the times that I missed the opportunity to do good and improve someone's life because I thought that the person was unworthy and feared the backlash of my friends, or the time did not suit me.

Father, I ask that the eyes of my heart may be opened more fully so that I can see you in all of my brothers and sisters in the human family.

## *Resting*

Rest in the eye-opening presence of the Father by repeating "I CAN SEE" for as long as it is possible. May your eyes be opened as you are drawn deeper into the loving presence of the Father.

## *Reflecting*

Life is about doing good without stopping to ask if the person deserves it or if it is the right time.

**Lenten Lectio Series** - Lectio Booklet-Journeying with the Gospels of Lent- Year A (Now available). Meditate on the Way- Living the Word Podcast accompanies the series (Available on all podcast platforms). Further resources: [lectio.newrydominican.com](http://lectio.newrydominican.com)

A simple summary of Lectio steps can be found in the porch of the church.