

**SPIRITUALITY**

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

John 8:12

I am the light of the world, says the Lord;  
whoever follows me will have the light of life.

**Gospel**

John 9:1-41; L31A

As Jesus passed by he  
saw a man blind from  
birth.  
His disciples asked him,  
“Rabbi, who sinned, this  
man or his parents,  
that he was born blind?”  
Jesus answered,  
“Neither he nor his  
parents sinned;  
it is so that the works  
of God might be  
made visible through  
him.

We have to do the works of the one  
who sent me while it is day.  
Night is coming when no one can work.  
While I am in the world, I am the light  
of the world.”

When he had said this, he spat on the  
ground  
and made clay with the saliva,  
and smeared the clay on his eyes,  
and said to him,  
“Go wash in the Pool of Siloam”—  
which means Sent—.

So he went and washed, and came back  
able to see.

His neighbors and those who had seen  
him earlier as a beggar said,  
“Isn’t this the one who used to sit  
and beg?”

Some said, “It is,”  
but others said, “No, he just looks  
like him.”

He said, “I am.”

**Reflecting on the Gospel**

The second creation account in the book of Genesis tells us how “the LORD God formed the man out of the dust of the ground and blew into his nostrils the breath of life” (Gen 2:7, NABRE). God was the first potter! God was the first to have the pleasure of taking dust and water, mixing it and smoothing it, and then drawing it into a divine image into which God breathed God’s very own life. This Sunday’s gospel tells of another divine potter—Jesus, the Son of God—who uses his own saliva to mix with the dust of the earth, make clay, and use it to bring new seeing and believing out of a blind beggar. All the man needed to do was to obey Jesus’ command to “Go wash.” He did so, and was recreated to see with the new eyes of faith.

Through baptism we come to a new seeing and we are recreated into being more perfect members of the Body of Christ, more truth-filled images of God. Our own believing-responding to Jesus continually recreates us with new spiritual insight, with deeper believing, with more sure understanding of who Jesus is for us and who we are to be for others.

This long gospel intertwines many conversation-encounters on many levels. There is the conversation-encounter of the miracle: Jesus touched, the man “went and washed.” There are the conversation-encounters of relationships: the disciples and Jesus, Jesus and the blind man, the neighbors and the blind man, parents and the Pharisees, Pharisees and the blind man, Pharisees and Jesus. There are the conversation-encounters about seeing: gaining sight, resisting sight; con-

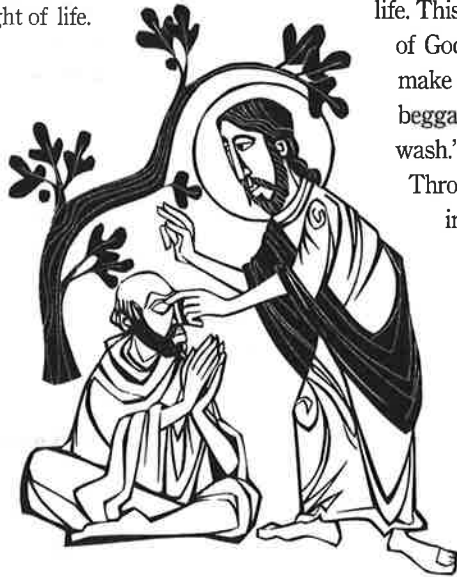
ing to faith, resisting faith. Lent invites us into the same conversation-encounters with Jesus, in which we choose either to be drawn toward Jesus or to turn away from him. Which do we choose? This is our lifelong baptismal challenge.

The miracle recorded in this gospel is less about a blind man receiving his sight than it is about the openness of the blind man to having an encounter with Jesus, his willingness to enter into conversation with him, and his readiness to believe and respond in worship. This gospel challenges those who are preparing for the Easter sacraments to deepen their faith in Jesus’ power to recreate them as members of his Body. It challenges all of us to deepen our faith so that we, too, are recreated with ever new Life. Then, like the blind man whom Jesus helps to see, we can exclaim “I do believe” and worship with raised hearts and voices.

**Living the Paschal Mystery**

Baptism is a ritual sign of coming to believing, admitting us to full participation in worship. This statement doesn’t imply that those who have not been baptized or fully received into the church haven’t worshiped God. They have or they probably wouldn’t be seeking to be initiated into the Catholic Church. Initiation changes the way one can worship and the sign of this is admittance to Eucharist and reception of the Body and Blood of our Lord.

Worship, however, is far more than attendance and engagement in ritual acts, as important as that is. Worship includes a mission to reach out to others who are in need of spiritual insight, of a more sure believing, of a deeper conversation with Jesus that brings recreation and life. Authentic worship always requires a response of charity on behalf of others. Authentic worship includes an encounter with the One who gives us sight and a conversation that recreates us to full stature in Christ.



*Continued in Appendix A, pp. 272–273,  
or John 9:1, 6-9, 13-17, 34-38 in Appendix A,  
p. 273.*

**Fourth Sunday of Lent, March 26, 2017**

He replied,  
"If he is a sinner, I do not know.  
One thing I do know is that I was blind and now I see."  
So they said to him,  
"What did he do to you?  
How did he open your eyes?"  
He answered them,  
"I told you already and you did not listen.  
Why do you want to hear it again?  
Do you want to become his disciples, too?"  
They ridiculed him and said,  
"You are that man's disciple;  
we are disciples of Moses!  
We know that God spoke to Moses,  
but we do not know where this one is from."  
The man answered and said to them,  
"This is what is so amazing,  
that you do not know where he is from, yet he opened my eyes.  
We know that God does not listen to sinners,  
but if one is devout and does his will, he listens to him.  
It is unheard of that anyone ever opened the eyes of a person born  
blind.  
If this man were not from God,  
he would not be able to do anything."  
They answered and said to him,  
"You were born totally in sin,  
and are you trying to teach us?"  
Then they threw him out.  
When Jesus heard that they had thrown him out,  
he found him and said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?"  
He answered and said,  
"Who is he, sir, that I may believe in him?"  
Jesus said to him,  
"You have seen him,  
and the one speaking with you is he."  
He said,  
"I do believe, Lord," and he worshiped him.  
Then Jesus said,  
"I came into this world for judgment,  
so that those who do not see might see,  
and those who do see might become blind."  
Some of the Pharisees who were with him heard this  
and said to him, "Surely we are not also blind, are we?"  
Jesus said to them,  
"If you were blind, you would have no sin;  
but now you are saying, 'We see,' so your sin remains."

*or* John 9:1, 6-9, 13-17, 34-38; L31A

As Jesus passed by he saw a man blind from birth.  
He spat on the ground and made clay with the saliva,  
and smeared the clay on his eyes, and said to him,  
"Go wash in the Pool of Siloam"—which means Sent—.  
So he went and washed, and came back able to see.  
His neighbors and those who had seen him earlier as a beggar said,  
"Isn't this the one who used to sit and beg?"  
Some said, "It is,"  
but others said, "No, he just looks like him."  
He said, "I am."  
They brought the one who was once blind to the Pharisees.  
Now Jesus had made clay and opened his eyes on a sabbath.  
So then the Pharisees also asked him how he was able to see.  
He said to them,  
"He put clay on my eyes, and I washed, and now I can see."  
So some of the Pharisees said,  
"This man is not from God,  
because he does not keep the sabbath."  
But others said,  
"How can a sinful man do such signs?"  
And there was a division among them.  
So they said to the blind man again,  
"What do you have to say about him,  
since he opened your eyes?"  
He said, "He is a prophet."  
They answered and said to him,  
"You were born totally in sin,  
and are you trying to teach us?"  
Then they threw him out.  
When Jesus heard that they had thrown him out,  
he found him and said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?"  
He answered and said,  
"Who is he, sir, that I may believe in him?"  
Jesus said to him,  
"You have seen him,  
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He said,  
"I do believe, Lord," and he worshiped him.