

GOSPEL

John 9:1, 6-9, 13-17, 34-38 (Shorter form)

As Jesus went along, he saw a man who had been blind from birth. He spat on the ground, made a paste with the spittle, put this over the eyes of the blind man and said to him, 'Go and wash in the Pool of Siloam' (a name that means 'sent'). So the blind man went off and washed himself, and came away with his sight restored.

His neighbours and people who earlier had seen him begging said, 'Isn't this the man who used to sit and beg?' Some said, 'Yes, it is the same one.' Others said, 'No, he only looks like him.' The man himself said, 'I am the man.'

They brought the man who had been blind to the Pharisees. It had been a sabbath day when Jesus made the paste and opened the man's eyes, 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.' 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. 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.

'Are you trying to teach us,' they replied 'and you a sinner through and through, since you were born!' And they drove him away.

Jesus heard they had driven him away, and when he found him he said to him, 'Do you believe in the Son of Man?' 'Sir,' the man replied 'tell me who he is so that I may believe in him.' Jesus said, 'You are looking at him; he is speaking to you.' The man said, 'Lord, I believe', and worshipped him.

REFLECTION OF POPE LEO XIV

15 March 2026

The Gospel reading for the Fourth Sunday of Lent narrates the healing of a man blind from birth (cf. Jn 9:1–41). Through the symbolism of this account, John the Evangelist speaks to us of the mystery of salvation: while we were in darkness, while humanity walked in gloom (cf. Is 9:2), God sent his Son as the light of the world, to open the eyes of the blind and illuminate our lives.

The prophets had announced that the Messiah would open the eyes of the blind (cf. Is 29:18; 35:5; Ps 146:8). Jesus himself confirmed the authenticity of his mission by showing that "the blind receive their sight" (Mt 11:5), and he presented himself with the words: "I am the light of the world" (Jn 8:12). Certainly, all of us can say that we are "blind from birth," for by ourselves we cannot see the mystery of life in all its depth. That is why God became flesh in Jesus, so that the clay of our humanity, shaped by the breath of his grace, might receive a new light, one capable of helping us to see ourselves, others and God in truth.

It is striking that, over the centuries, the opinion has spread and persists to this day that faith is a kind of "leap in the dark," a renunciation of thought, such that having faith would mean believing "blindly." However, the Gospel shows us that through contact with Christ, our eyes are opened. Indeed, the religious authorities ask the healed blind man with insistence: "Then how were your eyes opened?" (Jn 9:10); and again: "How did he open your eyes?" (v. 26).

Brothers and sisters, we too are healed by the love of Christ and are called to live our faith with "open eyes." Faith is not a blind act, a forsaking of reason or a retreat into some sort of religious certainty that causes us to turn our gaze away from the world. On the contrary, faith helps us to see things "as Jesus himself sees them, with his own eyes: it is a participation in his way of seeing" (Lumen Fidei, 18). In this sense, faith is an invitation to "open our eyes," as the Lord did, especially towards the suffering of others and the afflictions of the world.

Today, in a particular way, in the face of the many questions of the human heart, as well as the tragic situations of injustice, violence and suffering that mark our time, it is essential that our faith be alert, attentive and prophetic. It should likewise open our eyes to the darkness of the world, and bring to others the light of the Gospel through our commitment to peace, justice and solidarity.

Let us ask the Virgin Mary to intercede for us, so that the light of Christ may open the eyes of our hearts and enable us to bear witness to him with simplicity and courage.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

What stood out to you from the Gospel or Reflection/Homily?



Head: As the story unfolds, the blind man's understanding of Jesus grows—from “a man,” to “a prophet,” and finally to “Lord.” What causes this change in him, and what do we learn from the way his faith develops?



Heart: The man begins in darkness but gradually comes to see both physically and spiritually. Where in your own life or faith have you experienced a similar movement toward greater clarity or trust?



Hands: If faith means learning to see with Christ's eyes, where might he be inviting you this week to look more carefully at the suffering or needs of others?

PRAYER

Spend some time in prayer with one another:

1. Conscious of what has just been shared, members briefly name/describe their prayer needs.
2. Intentionally call on the Holy Spirit to be present (e.g. “Come Holy Spirit, please be present as we pray”)
3. Offer prayers of thanks and praise to God.
4. Pray for each others' prayer needs. Where appropriate, you may like to encourage the group to place a hand on the shoulder of the individual that you are currently praying for.
5. Conclude your prayer time with another prayer of praise, perhaps praying the ‘Glory Be’.