

March 19, 2023

Fourth Sunday of Lent

1 Sm 16:1b, 6-7, 10-13a

Eph 5:8-14

Jn 9:1-41

GROW AS A DISCIPLE | PRAY, STUDY, ENGAGE, SERVE

GROW: Five days, five minutes of sunshine: That's how the city where I live greeted 2023. As the month wore on, the gloom seemed unrelenting with only momentary breaks in the clouds. When the sun did return, people posted photos on social media with a combination of joy and relief. That experience hints at the effect Jesus had on St. Paul and the early Christians. As he writes, "You were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord." Today, just as then, Jesus brings light and healing to the darkness within us and within our world. Unlike the elusive sun, we can see the light of Jesus every day – in the people we love, the kindness of strangers, moments of prayer, unexpected joys. In turn, St. Paul encourages us to "live as children of light" by being the face of Jesus to others.

GO EVANGELIZE | PRAYER, INVITATION, WITNESS, ACCOMPANIMENT

GO: Even in the midst of Lent as a penitential season, the Sunday readings offer us much hope. Consider today's familiar story of Jesus healing the blind man. He doesn't just tell the man to open his eyes. Instead, Jesus smears clay on the man's eyes and has him wash in the Pool of Siloam; only then does the blind man see. He was transformed through Christ. Through our baptism we, too, have been transformed and "enlightened," becoming sons and daughters of light (CCC 1216). As we continue to observe Lent, perhaps we're working on areas in our life where we have been spiritually blind – or at least not seeing 20/20. Through our baptism and the sacraments, we can be healed and transformed by Jesus, the "light of the world." In turn we can share that light with others, as we continue to grow in the virtues of "goodness and righteousness and truth" of which St. Paul speaks.

PRAY: Psalm 23 is a favorite of many and for good reason. Read or listen to it this week as encouragement on your Lenten journey:

*The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.
In verdant pastures he gives me repose;
beside restful waters he leads me;
he refreshes my soul.*