

Fourth Sunday of Lent: The healing of the man born blind and the call back to community

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In this Sunday's Gospel, Jesus encounters a man who has been blind since birth. When the disciples see him, they ask Jesus if the man or his parents are responsible for his inability to see. Their question reflects a common way people try to make sense of suffering by looking for a cause or someone to blame.

Jesus responds by letting them know that neither the man nor his parents sinned. The man's blindness is not a punishment or a moral failure. And rather than offering an explanation, Jesus turns the focus to what God can do in the present moment. He invites them to see this encounter as an opportunity for God's work to be revealed.

From blindness to new life: A gospel of transformation

Jesus heals the man, but The Gospel presents it as something deeper — a new beginning. The healing of the man born blind points to baptismal illumination. He receives not just sight, but a new identity, and when he gains his sight, even his neighbors struggle to recognize him. Some are convinced he is the same man. Others insist he only looks like him. The change is so complete that it unsettles those who thought they knew him.

His new sight does not immediately lead to acceptance. People doubted him, and he was questioned repeatedly by the religious authorities. His parents are afraid to speak openly, and even distanced themselves from him. The more honestly he speaks about what happened to him, the more isolated he becomes. Until he is eventually expelled from the community.

A new sight brings clarity, but it can also bring tension. Baptism and conversion do not simply add something to our lives, they change us in ways that others may not understand or welcome. Growth in faith can disrupt old expectations and relationships.

Mission in community: building resilient communities for our common home

Dilexit Nos reminds us that mission is never lived in isolation. Mission is experienced in fellowship with our communities and with the whole Church. When we turn aside from the community, we turn aside from Jesus himself. When we turn our back on the community, our friendship with Jesus grows cold. Love for our brothers and sisters in the Church is not optional. It is the very fuel that sustains our relationship with Christ.

This shared commitment is not only an expression of faith, but also a way of building resilient communities. And it is for this reason that community lies at the heart of the [Laudato Si' Goal](#) of Community Resilience and Empowerment. The Gospel shows us that resilience is not built through rules or distance, but through presence, accompaniment, and shared responsibility. Communities become resilient when people choose to stay, to support one another, and to make that support tangible.

Witnessing to the light within our common home

The Gospel ends with a moment of care and recognition. After the man is expelled, Jesus seeks him out. He meets him again, invites him to believe, and receives his faith. What the community could not offer, Jesus does. The man finds belonging not through approval or status, but through a relationship with Christ.

As we journey through Lent, this Gospel invites us to reflect on our own openness to change. It asks us to consider how God might be working in our lives, even when that work challenges us or makes us uncomfortable. It reminds us that moving toward the light often requires letting go of familiar ways of seeing and trusting that God is leading us toward a new life.

May we also pause during this Lenten season and reflect on the question: ***Where am I being sent to witness to the light I have received within my community?***