

March 22 2020 4th Sunday of Lent, the blind man

Are we blind at times to the great love God shows us, every day? Do we pay the appropriate amount of respect when we approach the Altar of the Sacrifice to receive the Eucharist? Two very important questions that we should consider each time we come to Mass to receive the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ.

With this focus in mind, there is a song that, that for me captures, how I feel about Christ...and the Eucharist. Maybe you know it? It's called, "You make me feel brand new" by the Stylistics and the lyrics toward the end of the song summarize this feeling I have and, bare, with me, (You would have heard me sing at this point) "Without you, Life has no meaning or rhyme, like notes to a song out of time, How can I repay, you for having faith in me?" It's not something I can explain, it's just how I feel, when I think of Jesus.

For the last few years of my banking career I had the serenity prayer on my office wall. I used to think it was for me, when I was struggling with, all the demands and politics of the bank, wanting only to help people with their financial needs. Like my relationship with God, with whom I find myself blind, at times, I was blind to think my ideals were more important than that of the banks and credit unions, I, worked for. However, as my relationship with Jesus changed and my faith grew I began to realize that the prayer wasn't as much for me as for others who would come into my office for financial advice. The discussions I was having, started to revolve around faith and God and how He is active in our lives, as I became more open to the working of the Holy Spirit in my life.

Needless to say, this was not well received by my superiors. But, this was ok, because, at the same time, I began to realize that my life was not my own, it was for God and what He was asking, of me. It was also around this time that I began my discernment of becoming a deacon and at first, I felt I could ever be a worthy

candidate, given my past. Thankfully, it was also around this time that Scripture began to open up for me, beginning to make sense, as, not only a part of, our liturgies, but, of my own life and how it was influencing decisions I was making. Yes, there was a lot going on spiritually.

Like the blind man in the Gospel story today, I too was blind to the reality of God's love for me and that I was, merely passing through life, trying to discern His voice. There are a number of lessons that we can take away from the encounter with the blind man and the Pharisees. One, is that we shouldn't be afraid to speak up, if there is something that we believe, in. For the blind man it was his acceptance that Jesus was the Messiah. And secondly, that, as the light of the world, we too can receive God with Joy and enthusiasm, sharing it with others in our, lives.

By allowing ourselves to be part of the Gospel story, we can see our own resistance to the truth as well as our profession of faith. In doing so, we allow ourselves to go deeper into our relationship with Christ, experiencing a greater conversion each and every time we partake of the Eucharist. By fully entering into the Eucharistic celebration at Mass, we too can begin to let go of those things that block the light, that block our ability to be the best version of ourselves as we journey with other Christians on the path to salvation.

It's a beautiful thing when we participate in the Eucharist and realize that Jesus, becomes part of us, as we become the Body of Christ. We will also begin to see Jesus in those we meet; our neighbours, our friends and in all things, as we make our own way home. And, if we pay close enough attention we can see the blind man among the communion of saints, the mystical body of Christ. I am often in awe of the journey that our young people are taking; receiving for, the first time, the Body of, Christ.

It is a journey that if I knew then what I do now, I would do things very differently. But, then, the journey wouldn't be for me what it was, not becoming who I am, today, bringing me to this point in my life. Because, as my trust grows, in God, I realize that I need to allow Him to take the reins of my life, entering fully into the experience of the church and the focal point of our faith, the Eucharist.

When you leave here today, consider what the story reveals about God and the healing of the blind man. That, the mercy of God, comes to those who believe that Jesus is Lord. Remember the Lyrics from the song, reflecting on your own relationship with Christ; that, your life would truly have no meaning without Him.