

Dear parishioners,

The gospel this week is that of the man born blind. The fourth Sunday of Lent is also known as “Laetare Sunday” (Rejoice Sunday). This week I would like to suggest a beautiful reflection by Pope Saint John Paul II on what today’s liturgy teaches us.

*Dear Brothers and Sisters,*

*“Laetare, Jerusalem (Rejoice, Jerusalem)...”*. With the words of the prophet Isaiah, the Church invites us to rejoice today, at the midpoint of our Lenten penitential journey. Joy and light are the dominant theme of today’s liturgy. The Gospel narrates the story of *“a man born blind”* (Jn 9,1). Seeing him, Jesus made clay with his saliva, spread the clay on his eyes and told him: “God, wash in the Pool of Siloam (which means Sent). So he went and washed and came back seeing” (Jn 9,6-7).

The man born blind represents *the human person marred by sin*, who desires to know the truth about himself and his personal destiny but is prevented from doing so by congenital illness. Only Jesus can cure him: He is *“the light of the world”* (Jn 9,5). Handing himself over to him, every human being who is spiritually blind from birth has the fresh possibility of “coming to the light,” namely to supernatural life. For the one who meets Christ, there is no other alternative: either *he recognizes his need of him and of his light*, or he chooses to do without. In the case of doing without Christ, the same *presumption* prevents both the one who thinks he is just before God and the one who considers himself an atheist, from being open to authentic conversion.

Dear brothers and sisters, may no one close his soul to Christ! He gives to the one who accepts him the light of faith, the light that can transform the heart, and, consequently, mentalities, social, political, and economic situations dominated by sin. *“...I do believe, Lord!”* (Jn 9,38). With the man born blind, may each of us be ready humbly to profess our own attachment to him.

May the Blessed Virgin Mary who is so totally pervaded by the radiance of divine grace obtain the light of Christ for us.

Fr. Augustin