



4th Sunday of Lent 22nd March 2020



CLONARD MONASTERY

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ClonardMonastery



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Until Further Notice

There will be no Public Masses in Clonard

Masses available via the webcam

Clonard church open to public 10.30am – 5.30pm Mon-Sat

12 Noon – 6pm on Sundays

Monastery Reception open at the usual times

There will be no priest on Duty and no Confessions will be heard.

MASSES AVAILABLE VIA WEBCAM

Sunday March 22nd: 7.00am / 11am

Monday, March 23rd: 7.00am / 9.30am / 6.15pm

Tuesday, March 24th 7.00am / 9.30am / 6.15pm

Wednesday March 25th / 7.00am / 9.30am / 6.15pm

Thursday March 26th: 7.00am / 9.30am / 9.00pm

Friday March 27th: 7.00am / 9.30am / 6.15pm

Saturday March 28th: 7.00am / 9.30am / 7.30pm [Vigil Mass]

GOD'S WORD THIS WEEK -

22nd March Fourth Sunday of Lent

I once was blind, but now I see!

Today's Readings 1 Sam 16:1b, 6-7, 10-13 Eph 5:8-14 John 9:1-41

Today's story of the cure of the blind man is another great baptismal story. The cure is relatively brief – a mere seven verses. More than five times that is devoted to a dispute involving the blind man, the Jewish critics of Jesus and finally Jesus himself.

Like most people of their time, the disciples shared a fatalistic view of the world. If bad things happened to a person, it was as punishment for some sin, perhaps even one they were unaware of, or one committed by members of a previous generation or even a punishment to meet some future evil that God had foresaw them committing in the future. Jesus takes a radically different view: God is not vindictive, but when bad things happen to good people, it can sometimes make a space for God's light to shine into the complex human condition.

Unlike most Gospel miracle stories, Jesus uses very ordinary things like mud and fresh water from the well to restore the man's sight: the baptismal liturgy will also use human symbols like water and oil. The pool of Siloam was the main water supply in Jerusalem. John tells us its name was derived from a root meaning 'sent'. Preaching on this text, St Augustine used it as a great symbol for baptism. "This blind man stands for the whole human race," he tells us, "if his blindness is infidelity, then his restoration to the light is faith. By washing in the pool called 'one who has been sent', he is baptised into Christ."

This story is unique among Gospel stories for another reason. Jesus is absent from the scene while a most of the action is taking place. We hear nothing of him after he has put the mud on the man's eyes and sent him to the pool (v 7), until verse 35. It is the blind man occupies centre stage. He is on trial before the members of the council. His opponents must prove that he is either a trickster claiming to be cured or a supporter of the dangerous claims of the prophet Jesus to be the son of God. Witnesses are called – the man's neighbours and finally the star witnesses his parents. They have been so intimidated with threats of boycott that they refuse to say anything and throw the responsibility back on the man himself. 'He is of age' Jewish boys came of age at twelve, and while we have no idea of how old he is, he appears relatively young with a sharp mind.

The candidates undergoing the second scrutiny today are given the example of the blind man. Baptism gives us a new kind of sight. It enables us to see many things in life differently. Preparing for baptism confronts us with our blind spots.

Just because we are baptised, we are not excused from checking our blind spots.

Courtesy of REALITY magazine.



**New design Easter Mass Bouquet cards
are now available from Reception.**

