

Lent 4th Sunday (A)

30th March 2014

'Lord, that I may see!'

1Sam 16: anointing of David Ps 22: *my head you have anointed with oil ...*

Eph 5: *you are light in the Lord* Jn 9: 1–41: cure of the man born blind

Just as last week, we have a huge long piece from St John: a Lenten passage that helps us see the gifts that come from faith. We are working our way towards Easter, the greatest celebration we have of faith, and of baptism. The analogy that St John uses here is that of *sight*. Jesus is, as He describes Himself, “the Light of the World.” In the presence of that Healing Light, not only is this blind man healed physically, going from blindness to sight, but more importantly he goes from ignorance of Christ to knowledge, and therefore from doubt to faith.

If you notice, the blind man first starts by referring to the one who healed him simply as “the man called Jesus.” A little later he says of Jesus, “He is a prophet.” Then, after opposition from the Pharisees, he says, “If this man were not from God, He couldn’t do a thing.” Finally, after a longer period of reflection, and a further encounter with Jesus he says “Lord, I believe” and he worshipped Jesus. It is because of this lesson — a lesson in conversion to Christ — that it is so important a text for us for Lent. He begins as little more than an outcast — he ends as a believing disciple. Any single member of humanity can have

the gifts offered to us by God, through faith in Jesus — a life that is changed radically by baptism, that is symbolized for this man by his going and washing in the Siloam pool.

In Lent we are asking the Lord to open our eyes; not to let us be blind. To open our eyes more to the light of Christ: the light by which we can be guided through life; a light by which we may see well enough to make good decisions; the light which will, at the end, light our way through the darkness of death. True, vibrant, passionate faith in Christ is a really bright light for life. Let’s not take it for granted! We know that, just as the previously blind man was chastised for his new-found faith, we too will encounter opposition the more we live out our faith in a lively, real, determined way. We might well encounter opposition from within our own family. Nevertheless, there is nothing more worth doing in this life than in trusting, obeying, and worshipping the Lord Jesus. Not half-heartedly, or just externally in apparent practice; but with all one’s heart, and soul and mind. Pray well; give Him your heart at Mass; keep His commandments — all of them! — and love your neighbour as He would wish of you. And life is yours. “I am the Light of the World, says the Lord. Anyone who follows Me will have the Light of Life.”