



YEAR A – MARCH 22, 2020

This weekend, we would ordinarily celebrate the Second of Three Scrutinies -a time when our RCIA candidates examine their lives to see if anything needs to be changed in order to be better disciples of Jesus. That ceremony will not take place this year because of the Corona Virus that has our Churches closed with an abundance of caution – and rightly so. We ask God to bless those who have been infected with the virus and pray that this all comes to an end soon.

The Fourth Sunday of Lent is a good time for all of us to examine our conscience. To listen to the voice of the Holy Spirit. What is the Spirit saying to you?

St. John speaks to us in the Scripture Readings today about a man born blind who is healed by Jesus and given the gift of physical sight. It's an easy transition to reflect on spiritual blindness - the kind of blindness that affects all of us at one time or another. Lent is a good time to ask Jesus to heal that kind of blindness. He can do that too.

It's always easy to see the *speck* in the eyes of others and ignore the *beam* in our own. We can change that if we want to - and today is a good time to ask our Lord for help.

When the prodigal son was cured of his spiritual blindness, he came to his senses and asked his father for forgiveness. The older brother remained blind and could not see his own sin. Self-righteousness is always spiritually blind.

Our Lenten penance service is scheduled to be held on Palm Sunday, April 5th. at 7:00 PM. That may have to be cancelled because of the virus. As soon as we know, we will share the news with you.

The Three Scutinies, each year, are designed to help our candidates in the RCIA program to name their sins, make a good confession and begin the first day of the rest of their lives. The annual Lenten Penance Service is an opportunity for all of us to do that. The healing grace of the sacrament is available to all of us who need that kind of healing. The mercy of God is offered to us 24/7 even before repentance. The *acceptance* of God's mercy is always preceded by repentance.

We pray today for our spiritual blindness to be healed by Jesus, just like he healed the physical blindness of the man in today's gospel. We pray for the grace to see ourselves as Jesus sees us. We also pray for the end of the Corona Virus and God's protection from all harm while the virus is in our midst. It's important to keep the virus off our hands and it's important to keep our sins off our souls.

For a few moments in prayerful silence, imagine our Lord standing before you right now and asking, "What do you want me to do for you?" Imagine yourself answering, "Lord I want to see". And then imagine him saying, "What do you want to see...?"

