

**22 March 2020**

**Fourth Sunday of Lent**

*1 Samuel 16:1-13; Ephesians 5:8-14; John 9:1-41*

It's a beautiful tender ending that is meant to have an effect on us. It's meant to make us desire to see, to see God and to see as God wants us to see. Or, in the words of our second reading, **it's meant to create a desire in us to claim our identity as a children of the Light and further to desire to live as children of the Light.**

**I've seen that desire so often this week among our people** as we try to cope faithfully with these strange days and the threat and spread of the coronavirus. On Facebook, **Shirley shared the "Prayer of St. Francis,"** and it was the perfect thing for me to read. In the midst of fear and uncertainty, I read that prayer and reclaimed my core desire to not be preoccupied with my own worries but to rest secure in God and be everything I can for God. **"Make me a channel of Your peace...where there is hatred, let me sow your love...let me now seek so much to be consoled as to console."** To translate to my current reality, I was hearing, **"Let me understand what's going on in the world but not be knocked off my rocker. Let me never forget my communion with you, O God, and from that strong base extend myself to others in love."** That's the call. I believe **the noblest human desire** is to be everything we can for our God who is love.

Seeing. What we see. How we see. The first reading says God sees not as human beings see because God sees with the heart. **The implication is that we can train our eyes to see as God sees.**

**For a couple years in my twenties, I noticed every fire hydrant I passed.** I noticed the color of course, usually red, but also the make and relative age. I became so attuned to fire hydrants because I'm half German Shepherd. Actually, it's because I spent two summers cleaning and painting them for the city of Wausau. Fire hydrants occupied my life, so I noticed everyone one of them.

**If fear occupies your life, you'll notice every reason to fear. If Love occupies yourself, you'll notice every opportunity to love.** Which way have you been leaning this week? Can we seek the strength to see more with the eyes of love than the eyes of fear, even as we assess the truth of what is happening?

It seems to me that the **first step in strengthening our ability to see as God sees is to get to know God better through his Son, Jesus.** As the Godspell song goes, the recipe is to See him more clearly so as to love him more dearly and follow him more nearly. The man born blind gradually got to know Jesus better. We don't get a lot of the details, just that Jesus did an amazing thing in his life—gave him sight by putting clay on his eyes and telling him to go and wash in the Pool of Siloam---and at first the man didn't claim anything special about the giver of the gift, referring to him as "that man." Deeper reflection on the power of the gift led him to later refer to Jesus as "a prophet." Finally, after a direct, sighted encounter with Jesus, he sees him as the "Son of Man" and worships him.

**I don't know where you are in your journey with Jesus. If he is a wise man to you or the Son of God. I know that he accepts you and loves you as you are and longs for deeper relationship with you** and to give you eyes to see as he sees. As our confidence in Jesus increases, we come to see him as the one who gives meaning to our lives, or who determines what the meaning of our lives is. **One thing we learn is that "my life isn't about me."** Instead, my life is about staying in communion with the love who loves me and pouring it out for the good of the world as he did.

**When my life is about me, I panic when my security is threatened.** I panic when I fear an unknown future, and I get all freaked out when I'm uncertain about my wealth or my health. **When my life is about God, I do my best to serve God and others in all situations,** knowing that's all God asks of me, and that my greatest security is in God alone.

May we grow in that faith. May we be able with confidence to imagine the Lord Jesus even now making clay and rubbing it onto our eyelids that we might see as he sees.