

## **A Short Reflection for the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Lent from Father Steven**

My grandmother, when confronted with a great challenge would often say: "*When a door closes, you have to find other doors to open.*"

As the years have passed, I've tried to remember her words, especially when faced with the uncertainty that change can bring.

Right now, a lot of doors have closed: restaurants, stores, schools, churches. And for a time, we'll have to "close the door" on our usual routines.

COVID-19 has disrupted so much of what is a part of daily life, both here and throughout the world. Lots of people feel anxious as we wonder what the next few weeks and months will bring.

In the Gospel reading for the 4th Sunday of Lent, Jesus opens the eyes of a blind man (*John 9:1-41*) Jesus enables the man to see what he could not see before.

Of course, the story is much more than just about eyesight and healed retinas.

**It is about being granted to gift of seeing what we need to see."**

So, I go back to grandma: "*Seeing and finding doors that can be opened when others are shut.*"

--That may entail being more being aware that "social distancing" doesn't mean we stop communicating with one another. Could this be an opportunity to take the time (we all have a lot more of it!) to connect with those we ought to connect more deeply with?

--Could we channel our anxiety into care of those who risk being closed off by isolation? The elderly, the homebound, the chronically ill often become "invisible" members of our families and communities. Regular phone calls to those "less connected" may be a "lifeline" to those facing the tedium of a day alone.

--"No Mass on Sunday" doesn't mean the prayer of the parish in "on pause mode." Christ promised to be present to us in the Eucharist. That promise in no way includes a promise to be absent elsewhere! The present situation invites us to pray in other ways. Some folks might pray the rosary together as a family. Others might take a walk through the cemetery to reflect and pray about all the struggles and challenges that the previous generations faced. Still others may pray daily by going to a quiet place to simply ask for the grace to face each day as it comes, with serenity.

--Could this be a door of opportunity to teach our children? Sometimes we inherit the crazy idea that life will always go according to what we plan. Crazy idea, huh?

As Christians, we must cultivate ways of promoting resilience, hope and joy, even when the script of life has to be re-written. Part of the strategy will mean telling and re-telling the stories of those who before us faced great doors of uncertainty. Our legacy to the next generation must always be hope in the midst of adversity. If we pass on anything, *hope* must be part of the package.

So, let's pray for one another:

That as Christ bestowed vision, it would be bestowed on us anew.

To be granted the vision to find and open doors, while others are closed, this will be a light and a grace even amidst our uncertainty.



*Father Steven Labaire*  
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