

March 22, 2020 | Fourth Sunday of Lent

Canadian Martyrs Catholic Parish

835 Northmount Dr. N.W. Calgary, AB T2L 0A3 | 403 284 3311 | canadianmartyrsparish.ca

THE MAN WHO WAS BORN BLIND

SUNDAY GOSPEL REFLECTIONS

*If we are experiencing
a sense of darkness, let us turn to
Jesus who is our light.*

*In all that is happening,
let us not lose sight of Jesus
who says to each of us;*

I am the Light of the world,

*anyone who follows me will
never walk in darkness,
but will have the light of life.*

- BR MICHAEL MOORE OMI



The
OBLATES
ALWAYS CLOSE to the PEOPLE

The gospel today is very long; but it is also full of detail and well worth reading slowly. It concerns the man who was born blind whom Jesus healed on the Sabbath. A major theme in John's gospel is light versus darkness. The first few verses of John's gospel tell us that John the Baptist 'was not the light, only witness to speak for the light... the Word was the true light that brings light to all.' Later in the same gospel, Jesus clearly says for all to hear, I am the Light of the world, anyone who follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.' (John. 8.12).

Those of us who are able to see clearly cannot even imagine what it must be like to be born blind or lose one's sight. What must it be like never to see a flower, a sunset, or child's smile. This is the reality and experience of the man in the gospel; he was born blind and has spent his whole life in darkness. Jesus heals him on the Sabbath which angers the religious leaders. They don't believe the man when he tells them that Jesus healed him and they condemn Jesus as a sinner because he broke their law. It is they who have shut their hearts and closed their eyes from seeing Jesus for who he truly is. When Jesus tells the man it was the Son of Man who healed him, and says that it is he at whom he is looking, he says to Jesus, 'Lord, I believe.' He is no longer in darkness at any level. The Pharisees, however, refuse to believe or accept Jesus; they remain blind and prefer their own self-made darkness.

Through the journey and message of Lent, Jesus comes to offer us his light. He shines his light on any part of our lives that need healing. He offers to take us by our hand, lead us from our self-made darkness and gently lead us into the light of his healing and forgiveness. It is often through the hurtful things we say and do that we find ourselves in darkness. The longer we leave it and stay there, the harder for us it is to experience anything else. Jesus is the Light of the world who comes into the

shadows of our lives and invites us to step forward in his light. How does it serve us to stay in darkness? When Jesus invites us out from the darkness, we have two choices; we can follow the example of the man Jesus healed, whose heart and eyes were opened, or we can refuse Jesus' invitation, just as the Pharisees did and remain blind. The choice is ours.

These days and weeks in our homes, communities and countries we are being asked to face and deal with a whole new reality

because of the Corona-virus. These are challenging times for all of us. But we are not alone; Jesus the Light of the world is with us. In these days of confusion and uncertainty, he is our truth. If we are experiencing a sense of darkness, let us turn to Jesus who is our light. In all that is happening, let us not lose sight of Jesus who says to each of us; I am the Light of the world, anyone who follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.'

-Br Michael Moore OMI

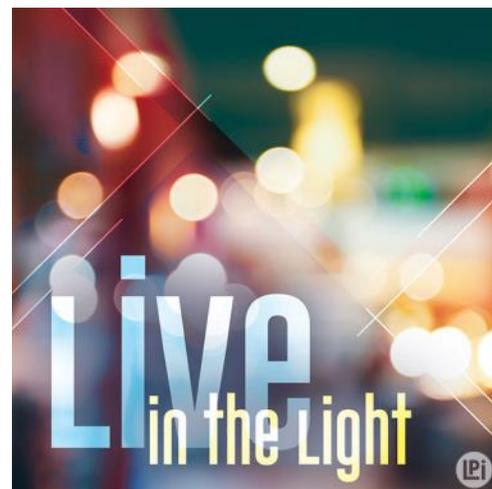
WHAT DO YOU MEAN I CAN'T SEE?

If we walk in the light of Christ, then we are able to assess the world and all of reality from God's perspective, not just a material and functional one. Holding the flashlight of truth, we are able to see beyond mere appearance and look into the heart of things. This past Ash Wednesday, Pope Francis said, "All around us, we see the dust of death. Lives reduced to ashes. Rubble, destruction, war. The lives of unwelcomed innocents, the lives of the excluded poor, the lives of the abandoned elderly. We continue to destroy ourselves, to return to ashes and dust. And how much dust there is in our relationships!" Pope Francis continued, "Look at our homes and families: Our quarrels, our inability to resolve conflicts, our unwillingness to apologize, to forgive, to start over, while at the same time insisting on our own freedom and our rights!"

The same reality of existence is before Francis' eyes and ours. How we understand, interpret, and qualify it is where the challenge lies. We all see innocents, the poor, elderly, and other marginalized people. The adjectives we use to describe them, and the rest of human experience will determine whether we are people of darkness or people of light. Just because we choose to take up some kind of Lenten discipline does not mean that we are allowing God to change and convert our hearts. After forty days of empty sacrifice, the scales may still remain on our eyes.

Often what we perceive is colored by our presuppositions, prejudices, assumptions, fears, and our needs. We judge things and people as if they are objects that are far removed from us rather than as living individuals and blessings with whom we share relationships. It is precisely this short sighted and myopic vision that leads to erroneous and hurtful judgments. But we are slow and reluctant to change. Our stubbornness continues to convince us that we are right and that our vision is perfect. How wrong we are. We cannot resolve our conflicts because we move through life with lenses of ignorance rather than lenses of clarity.

Often, we are more concerned about whether we have a good connection to social media and current affairs, than a good connection to the Gospel. Words can easily become empty and we can find ourselves spreading falsehoods and rumors like wildfire. We can destroy a person's character in an instant and think nothing of it. We convince ourselves that ignorance, gossip, and protecting our interests is acceptable as we continue to travel the road of darkness blindly thinking we can see. And all the



while the world continues to spin out of control and weep.

Shootings happen so often that they no longer impress us. School lockdowns and metal detectors are commonplace. Many are confused and struggle with their identities, many wonder whether the traditional moral voice has lost its relevance replaced by the morality of the “politically correct.” We live with relativism. Sometimes it is easier to just accept this rather than standing up and “exposing the fruitless works of darkness.” What does it mean to be fully and sacredly human and walk in the light of Christ?

Until we can pray, “The Lord is my shepherd, there is nothing I shall want,” and really mean it, not too much will change. We need to stay in the desert for a while and get our heads, hearts, and souls straight so that we can see and live in the light. Being in the desert of Lent will allow us to really ask and answer the question, “Do you believe in the Son of Man?” If we can answer that question with a resounding “yes!” and truly believe that the Lord is our shepherd, then we can break through the tethers of prejudice, eradicate fear, dispel the darkness of hatred and sin, discover freedom, live in peace, work for justice, be effective stewards of creation, assist the migrant and the immigrant, and safeguard our economic systems and policies so that they truly serve all of God’s children. There will no longer be a question of whether life is sacred. We will know from Whom it comes, to Whom it belongs and to Whom it returns.

There are no easy answers to life’s staggering dilemmas. However, when we live as children of the light, as children who have been blessed with the gift of faith, we will produce every kind of goodness and righteousness and truth. It certainly stands to reason that where there is goodness, righteousness and truth, there is God. As simple people of simple means let us ask ourselves a profound question: Where in our lives do we find goodness, righteousness, and truth? When we gain an answer, we would be wise to focus our energy there and pursue it. Doing so will lead us from blindness to sight.

Pope Francis is correct. There is dust everywhere! It is covering our relationships, our vision, our understanding, our minds, our hearts, our wills, and our souls. Many suffer from spiritual cataracts and are not even aware of it. In fact, they staunchly believe that they see just fine! Will we recognize that we do not see clearly and reach for the remedy, or will our stubbornness and fierce independence lead us to reject the light and become truly blind?

We all come to God by different paths. But in all our journeys is the need to be healed from blindness and brought into clear sight. We all struggle with cataracts that affect our spiritual vision in different ways. However blurred our vision may be, what is required is a huge dose of humility that allows us to understand and accept that we do not see as clearly as we may think. This may be regarding world social issues, personal and professional relationships, relationships with authority, or even the stranger we meet on the street. The adjectives we use to describe what we see can reveal just how blind we may be. We can never presume that we have clear sight and must always strive to gaze into the heart of people and things as God does. Lord Jesus, touch the eyes of my soul so that I may truly see!

Rev. Mark Suslenko

MASS TIMES

Monday– Saturday 9:00 am

Saturday 5:00 pm Vigil Mass
(Confessions 4:00 pm to 4:30 pm)

Sunday 9:00 am, & 10:45 am

Children’s Liturgy of the Word (ages 3-7) held (Sept — June) at the 10:45 am Sunday Masses except on holidays and long weekends of the Calgary Catholic Schools.



Read the full Diocesan Directives

MASSES ARE CANCELLED

From March 17 to
April 5, 2020



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PREVENTING
THE SPREAD OF
COVID-19

Our Parish Vision:

"FORMING MISSIONARY DISCIPLES" IN
BUILDING THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

Our Parish Mission:

WE SERVE THE PEOPLE IN OUR PARISH,
COMMUNITY AND DIOCESE BY LIVING OUT
THE EVANGELIZING MISSION OF CHRIST
WITH FAITH, HOPE AND LOVE.

LITURGICAL CELEBRATIONS**Sacrament of Reconciliation:**

Saturday 4:00 – 4:45 pm or anytime by
appointment.

Blessed Sacrament Adoration: Every
Friday at 9:30 am – 10:00 am

Rosary:

Mon.- Friday 8:30 am (before Mass)
Sunday, 8:30 am & 10:15 am (before Mass)

Our Mother of Perpetual Help Devotion: Saturday morning 9:00 am Mass

Baptism

A family interview with the priest is required prior to any arrangement for the baptism of a child. Baptismal instruction is obligatory for both parents.

Wedding Arrangement:

Couples contemplating marriage should contact a priest at least six months prior to the date chosen.

Hospital Visit: If you have a family member or you have the permission of someone in the hospital who would like a visit by one of our priests to receive Anointing of the Sick, please call the Parish Office at 403 . 284 . 3311.

PARISH STAFF**Parish Priest**

Rev. Vincent TuanHa
pastor@canadianmartyrsparish.ca

Parish Secretary

Ricki Blackwell
Robyn McWilliam
Etta Ibach (Office Volunteer)
secretary@canadianmartyrsparish.ca

Parish Custodian:

Pol Max Ecology 403 . 512 . 8069
Andrew & Barry 403 . 289 . 2714

Society of St. Vincent de Paul

Hamper Request 587 . 392 . 0499
ssvpfoodhampers@gmail.com

THE 6 CHARACTERISTICS FOR LENT — GRACIOUS

Vacations can be great times for refueling the body and renewing bonds within a family and between friends. No matter how good the vacation was, it is almost always good to get home when it is over. Sleeping in our own bed, taking a shower in our own bathroom, and resting on our own couch are some of the aspects of home we can miss while on the road. That's why encountering truly gracious and hospitable people while we are away is so important. These people are not family, but they sure can provide for us a glimpse of home. They can be waiters at a restaurant, desk hosts at a hotel, or even Uber drivers. They enrich our lives if for only a moment, yet that moment can make all the difference. When disciples of Jesus Christ act in a gracious manner to all those they meet, they provide a glimpse of home. This home is not in a house in a particular

location, but it is a home prepared for all of us for eternity. No matter how comfortable we may be in our earthly homes, it truly pales in comparison to eternity with God. In that heavenly home, there is no darkness, only light. There are no tears, only joy. There is no hate, only love. We are ambassadors for heaven by how we offer ourselves to others. Our stewardship of hospitality allows others to see a glimpse of what God promises to us. Unless we truly step up and act in a gracious manner, will those we encounter ever know the Truth? I hate it when I am on the road and fail to meet people full of joy and welcome. At least I can look forward to coming home. What do those along the way look forward to in the next life that you can't show them a glimpse of in this one?

—Tracy Earl Welliver, MTS

LENTEN PARISH CELEBRATIONS AND ACTIVITIES

Lent is a 40-day period leading up to Easter, beginning with Ash Wednesday. Lent is a penitential season. That means it is an opportunity to examine your life, give your struggles to God, and invite him to help you become the-best-version-of-yourself. During Lent, there is a strong focus on prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. All these spiritual exercises help prepare us for the celebration of the passion, death, and resurrection of Jesus. (Source: www.dynamiccatholic.com)

STATIONS OF THE CROSS

Cancelled

SOUP SUPPERS

Cancelled

LENTEN PENANCE SERVICE - CANCELLED

We will have several priests available to hear confessions on Thursday, April 2nd at 7:00 pm. Whether it has been a month, 5 years, or 30 years, you are invited to receive God's mercy and forgiveness.

Prayer REQUESTS

May YOU know the deep love and support of our community through our thoughts and prayers.

OUR SICK & INFIRM - ESPECIALLY...

Luke Callin, Faye Lapaz,
Robert Tamayo and Mercy Ramos, Brian Sereda,
Annie Carvalho

OUR EXPECTANT MOTHERS & NEW BABIES

Jennifer Hickey (Mother)
Jillian Vaz (Mother)

OUR BELOVED DEAD

Nicola Parrotta, Cesare Siviglia, Kevin Nelson,
Wanda Kennedy, John Gaffney,
Lucille Millier, Lenore Rosgen, Suad Aziz Mukhtar

OUR SEMINARIANS

Bennet C., Ian M., James S., Kevin P.,
Mark D., Mark K., Matthew S.,
Peter A., and Santiago T.

PRAYER LISTS

If you would like to request prayers or be included in our prayer list, please call the office at 403 284 3311 or email us at prayerchain@canadianmartyrparish.ca

SICK OR INFIRM PARISHIONERS

If you know of parishioners who are hospitalized or confined to their homes, please notify the office at 403 284 3311 to arrange hospital or home visitation. It is also important to arrange to receive the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick before any surgery.

NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS



2020 TOGETHER IN ACTION Annual Bishop's Appeal.

Every year during the season of Lent, the Diocese of Calgary launches our Together in Action campaign. TIA supports diocesan ministries and programs in the 68 parishes across southern Alberta. It funds grants to almost 50 local charities and national and international partners. **Our parish's portion for 2020 is \$22,477.00.** Thanks to all of you who have supported our TIA Campaign in recent years. Last year 2019 we had met our share with a surplus of \$200 toward our Capital Renewal Fund. Your gift is a source of mercy and love in the life and mission of the Church. Please give generously. Any surplus from this year's portion will be forwarded to our parish Capital Renewal Fund.

PRAYER CHAIN

Prayer Partners needed. If you would like to join our new Prayer Chain Ministry which will consist of those who pledge to offer prayer from their home on behalf of those who contact our parish to request prayers, please send an email to prayer-chain@canadianmartyrparish.ca indicating that you would like to join this Ministry. No requirements other than that you will offer prayers for those in need.

Masses are Cancelled - COVID-19 Spread Prevention

Bishop McGrattan has written a letter to all pastors, deacons, lay association leaders, religious orders and the Faithful decreeing the cancellation of Masses (March 17 to April 5). Updated General Directives are now in effect until April 5. The letter, directives, prayers and resources are posted on <https://www.catholicyc.ca/blog/covid19>

For your convenience, please see the attached PDF files:

[The Memorandum of the Bishop to the Priest](#)

[The General Directives on Mass Cancellation](#)

[The Bishop's Letter to the Faithful](#)

Video Message from Bishop McGrattan

Here is a video message from our Bishop, which is available online. You may upload to your website or social media presence.

Youtube link: <https://youtu.be/bRGD6qRhvDE>

[Download video here](#)

Live-streamed Mass & Prayer Resources for the Domestic Church & Shut-Ins

Bishop McGrattan encourages all Catholics to pray at home, either by watching the live streamed Masses, having a time of prayer, following readings of the Sunday, and practising a spiritual communion. Here is the list of resources available on our website:

• Livestream or recorded Masses:

Weekday Masses will be live-streamed from St. Peter's, Calgary at <https://st-peters.ca/live/> - Masses will be recorded and posted for playback.

Sunday Mass will be live-streamed from St. Mary's Cathedral with the Bishop as celebrant. The link will be posted on our website: calgarydiocese.ca

○ Other streamed/televised Masses online:

Salt + Light Media Mass: <https://saltandlighttv.org/mass/>

Vatican Masses: <https://youtu.be/5YceQ8YqYMc>

EWTN Sunday Mass: <https://www.ewtn.com/tv/shows/sunday-mass-live>

✦ **Read Scripture**, practise *Lectio Divina* or read a spiritual reading

Daily Mass readings through CCCB: <https://nlo.cccb.ca/index.php/weekday-lectionary>

Give Us This Day: <https://giveusthisday.org/Digital>

Living With Christ: <https://livingwithchrist.ca>

○ **Pray the Liturgy of the Hours**, also known as the Prayer of the Church.

<http://universalis.com/> offers access without a subscription

Sunday Morning and Evening Prayers at home. Printables updated regularly: <https://liturgy.life/2020/03/keeping-sunday-holy-when-we-cannot-gather-for-mass-liturgy-of-the-hours/>

○ Video and other streaming resources

Word on Fire: <https://www.wordonfire.org/resources/video/>

Ascension Press for podcasts, videos and articles: <https://media.ascensionpress.com/category/ascension-presents/>

If your parish is a subscriber, get materials at Formed.org

○ Prayers

Spiritual Communion Prayer | [Download graphic](#) | [2 in 1 Letter Size](#)

Prayer to Our Lady, Health of the Sick (Pope Francis) Download [Letter Size Prayer](#) | [2 in 1 Letter size Prayer](#) | PNG - [Image 1](#) & [Image 2](#)

○ Silent prayer, Rosary or other devotional prayers

○ ***In addition to prayer, we can keep holy the Lord's Day by doing works of mercy. Here are some things you can do even when you cannot gather with others: write a note or call a friend or family member who might feel lonely; donate money to organizations assisting those in need; make mealtimes this day more special; read or create something beautiful*** (D. Macalintal, *Liturgy.Life*)

We invite you to make these resources available to your parishioners. Please note this list is *not exhaustive*. We invite you to share with us additional resources to share with the parishes in our Diocese. Email us at communications@calgarydiocese.ca



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PRINCIPAL

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*Sacred Heart of Jesus,
I place all my trust in you.*

Anonymous

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