

**Fourth Sunday in Lent March 26th 2017.**

**Theme: FAITH**

**Introduction**

**The Gospel reading today is about two cures and one tragedy. First there is the curing of the blind man's eyes. Bartimeaus was the man's name, named in the other Gospels. Through Jesus' touch, the man is now able to see .That is just a start. As usual St John's Gospel goes much deeper than that to show a second cure. Slowly the man comes to recognize Jesus as a prophet and then as Lord. The man moves from sight to insight, to faith .That's the second cure.**

**OPPOSITE**

**The very opposite happens with the Pharisees .They were born with vision but refused to believe .They were spiritually blind. Jesus says to them at the end "If you were born blind there would be no sin in that you can see and refuse to believe there's your sin ."**

**CONTRAST**

**The cured man accepts Christ. The Pharisees reject him. It is like two trains speeding past each other in opposite directions. As quickly as he moves to faith in Jesus as Lord and into the light, they move just as fast into hostility toward the Lord and into darkness. As he comes out of a dark tunnel , they enter it. Both the Pharisees and the cured man looked at Jesus of Nazareth. They saw an opponent. He saw a Savior.**

**Through faith we can see a deeper meaning in life. Here are examples: Through faith we see illness not just as a tragedy but also as an expression of the pain and limits of our world and a sharing in the Passion of Christ.**

**We see the church not simply as a social institution but as the voice and presence of the risen Christ in our world our guide for life.**

**We see the sacraments not just as ancient ritual but as the actions of the Lord rescuing us in so many different ways from darkness.**

**We see the Mass not as a ceremony but as the Sacrifice of the Cross perpetuated among us into its saving power.**

**We see our life not simply as a career but as a journey either towards or away from the Father.**

**We see our care for others not just as philanthropy but as an extension of the work of Christ.**

**We see marriage not just as a contract but as the promise of two people to give themselves to each other with the same kind of loyal self-sacrificing love that Jesus has for his Church.**

**We see sexuality not just as an instinct but as a sacred power that enables us to share in the work of creation.**

**We see death not as a biological end but as a passage to everlasting life.**

**We see smaller deaths in our life not as failures but as ways to new and deeper life.**

**We see the same things others see but in a deeper way.**

**In Baptism, we were given the capacity to see the Christ – centered events in our life. It is called the gift of faith. We have to care for and grow in that. Faith is very much like sight. Both physical sight and spiritual sight are gifts we can easily take for granted. Just as those who have been deprived of sight can appreciate what it means to see; so that those who have been without belief can appreciate the grace and gift of faith when it is given them.**

**Let's use this second half of Lent to deepen the gift of our Catholic faith through prayer, to learn about it through study, to display it in our relationships with others, to strengthen it by gathering with the Church on Sundays so we can proclaim it at Easter and live it the rest of the year .**

**Here is also a good time for us to look back at the healing we have received from the Lord in our life. Throughout this Gospel amid all the controversy surrounding his cure the man born blind clings to the simple truth of his experience of the Lord: "All I know is I was blind before, now I see."AMEN**

