

To be born blind was interpreted as a great evil and the result of some sin. The question that the disciples had of Jesus was, "Who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?"

The belief among the Jews was that illness and disease was a punishment from God for sin. Either punishment for the sins of one's parents, or for the sin of the person with the illness or the disease.

The belief of the Jews was that God was a God of rewards and punishments.

They believed that if you followed the commands of the Lord and did everything He asked of a person, God would give you a reward. One of the rewards was good health.

If you broke any of the Lord's commands and turned away from the Lord, He would punish you. One form of punishment was, they believed, poor health.

In the case of the man born blind, Jesus tells the disciples, "Neither he nor his parents sinned; it is so that the works of God might be made visible through him."

This is very clear that there is no connection here between sin and the man's blindness.

We can also ask the question, "How could he possibly have been born blind as a punishment for his sin?" An infant is not able to commit sin.

Then Jesus goes through a ritual in which he prepares Himself and the blind man so that He could bring about a cure.

Jesus spits on the ground and then makes a clay out of the saliva and dirt. He places the clay over the blind eyes. Jesus then tells the blind beggar to go wash himself in the Pool of Siloam. After he washed himself, he was cured from his blindness.

The beggar and his parents were excited about this unexpected miracle of healing and they gave praise to God for it.

They immediately became followers of Jesus as they saw that Jesus had powers way beyond what they had ever seen before.

The Jews, on the other hand, became upset that Jesus cured the blind beggar.

They knew that when word got out among the people about the cure, more Jews would be following Jesus. At the same time, the Jewish followers of Jesus knew that if they acknowledged Jesus as having come from God that they would be expelled from the Temple. Jesus came with a message of love, forgiveness of sins, compassion, mercy and healing. There was power in what He was saying and doing. The message of this cure from blindness was that Jesus is able to cure people from their physical blindness and also from their spiritual blindness, even if that blindness began at birth.

We all have blind spots to some degree or another. This is not the same as being visually impaired.

There are different ways in which we can be spiritually blind.

One can be blind to one's own faults and failings.

Some people by their negative behaviors cause lots of hurt and pain to their family members, co-workers, or others around them. At the same time, they do not see or they refuse to see, that they are causing pain and hurt.

Sometimes decisions are made without seeing that these decisions have serious and negative consequences.

This Gospel story is a message of hope. We are reminded that the Lord is able to bring healing to all areas of our lives, even to those wounded areas that began at birth.

If we are faced with an illness or disease, we can repent of our sins immediately so that sin and unforgiveness don't stand in the way of our healing.

Those suffering from the Coronavirus are not being punished by God. Don't let anyone try to convince you that God is using His wrath to draw people closer to Him. Who would want to get close to God if they saw Him as looking for ways to make their lives miserable? God allows suffering, but He doesn't will suffering. He wants what is best for us so that we can become the best version of ourselves.

Every time we pray for healing, the Lord heals and sometimes He cures.

All things are possible with the Lord God. Every time we pray for healing, the Lord heals, and sometimes He cures.

Fourth Sunday of Lent

March 22, 2020

St. Stephens Indian Mission

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Blessed Sacrament & St. Josephs

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Please view the Diocese of Cheyenne website dioceseofcheyenne.org as they have added a link that includes information on the Church's response to the coronavirus outbreak.

Some of those responses include no daily Mass, no Sunday Mass, or Adoration and Stations of the Cross. All public meetings (including AA and Bible Study) normally held on the Mission grounds are also suspended until further notice. The gift shop is also closed. The office is closed to the public as we encourage everyone to stay home. There will be people still at the office making sure the church is clean and disinfected and although the office is closed to the public you may call and calls will be returned as soon as possible. These restrictions are necessary as it is imperative we are responsible and act in solidarity for the common good. Bulletins will be posted to the parish website at www.saintstephensmission.com.

Please remember the church is open for private prayer every day from 8am-7pm. Continue to pray for the end of this pandemic. God Bless!

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♦ Come in seeking; come in wondering; come in hurting. Come into this house ♦
♦ of companionship and compassion. Come in. You are welcome here. Our ♦
♦ faith Family opens its doors to you and in the name of Christ, bids you ♦
Welcome!
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The purpose of St. Stephen's Indian Mission, the presence of the Roman Catholic Church among the Eastern Shoshone and Northern Arapaho, is to grow into a strong community of believers, sharing our lives in the Holy Spirit, forming one welcoming People of God, who are committed to Jesus Christ, His gospel and mission.

Readings March 23rd through March 29th:

Mon: Is 65:17-21; Ps 30:2, 4-6, 11-12a, 13b; Jn 4:43-54
Tue: Ez 47:1-9, 12; Ps 46:2-3, 5-6, 8-9; Jn 5:1-16
Wed: Is 7:10-14, 8:10; Ps 40:7-11; Heb 10:4-10; Lk 1:26-38
Thur: Ex 32:7-14; Ps 106:19-23; Jn 5:32-47
Fri: Wis 2:1a, 12-22; Ps 34:17-21, 23; Jn 7:1-2, 10, 25-30
Sat: Jer 11:18-20; Ps 7:2-3, 9b-12; Jn 7:40-53
Sun: Ez 37:12-14; Ps 130:1-8; Rom 8:8-11; Jn 11:1-45

Parish Collection

3/15 \$1049.80

"Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver." Corinthians 9:7

Holy Virgin of Guadalupe, Queen of the Angels and Mother of the Americas. We fly to you today as your beloved children. We ask you to intercede for us with your Son, as you did at the wedding in Cana.

Pray for us, loving Mother, and gain for our nation and world, and for all our families and loved ones, the protection of your holy angels, that we may be spared the worst of this illness.

For those already afflicted, we ask you to obtain the grace of healing and deliverance. Hear the cries of those who are vulnerable and fearful, wipe away their tears and help them to trust.

In this time of trial and testing, teach all of us in the Church to trust in God, to love one another, and to be patient and kind. Help us to bring the compassion and peace of Jesus to our land and to our hearts.

We come to you with confidence, knowing that you truly are our compassionate mother, health of the sick and cause of our joy.

Shelter us under the mantle of your protection, keep us in the embrace of your arms, help us always to know the love of your Son, Jesus. Amen.

Praised be Jesus Christ!

Praise Him now and always.

Father Hugo is celebrating a PRIVATE Mass every day so the Mass for the scheduled intentions is still being celebrated. Please feel free to call and leave a message if you have an intention.

Blessed Sacrament and St. Josephs

St. Josephs church will be open daily from 8am-7pm for private prayer. No more than 10 people are to be in the church at one time. God bless!

Mass Intentions this week

3/21: Saturday	For all people affected by COVID-19 or any serious illness, the elderly and homebound, as well as all medical personnel and caregivers for the sick.
3/22: Sunday	Cecelia Kasper on her birthday
3/23: Monday	+John Cunningham, Sr.
3/24: Tuesday	+Lynn & +Rosalyn Rixen
3/25: Wednesday	+Benedict & +Irene Benz
3/26: Thursday	+John Warren, Sr.
3/27: Friday	Russ Millar
3/28: Saturday	Jim Leonard
3/29: Sunday	+Mary Lou Goggles Nephi

4th Sunday of Lent – Cycle A Homily by Father Hugo L. Blotsky, O.S.B. March 22, 2020

When was the last time you thanked God for the gift of your eye sight? Chances are that you and I take our eye sight for granted, and that we can't imagine going through life without being able to see the things around us.

Try to imagine what it must be like to have been blind from birth. The man in this Sunday's Gospel had never seen blue skies, white snow, green grass, a red rose, a body of water, or a mountain top.

He had never seen a human being, nor had he ever seen himself in a mirror.

He had never seen a cat or a dog, a horse or a cow, a camel or a bird. He had been born blind without an inkling what seeing things is all about. Yet, the physically blind are able to see with an inner vision.

They are able to see in a way in which many of us are not able to see.

Being born blind is very similar to the condition of the beginning of the world. In the Book of Genesis, we learn that the earth was born blind.

We read in Genesis, "In the beginning, when God created the heaven and the earth, the earth was a formless wasteland, and darkness covered the abyss...." (Gen. 1:1-2).

The earth had no shape or size. It was a formless wasteland. And darkness covered the abyss.

Only after God said, "let there be light" (Gen1:3) that the day-by-day creative work of filling that "formless wasteland" began.

God's light meant sight. Now the world could watch the wonders of creation unfold:

the dome or sky that separated the waters above from the waters below.

the dry land, vegetation, the greater light (the sun) and the lesser light (the moon).

winged birds and swimming sea-creatures; all kinds of wild animals, cattle, and creeping things.

And finally, last and best of all, male and female humans were created in His divine image and likeness.

God rested on the seventh day so that He could enjoy the marvels of His own handiwork.

In our Gospel story today, we have the case of a man born blind whom Jesus cured so that he could physically see for the first time.

To be born with the gift of being able to see and then later to lose one's eyesight would perhaps be devastating.

To be cured of such blindness would indeed be a miracle.

In the Gospel story for today, the man was born blind. He had never been able to see until Jesus