

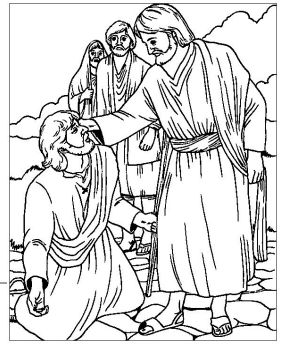
Fourth Sunday of Lent, Cycle A

Readings & Background

Gospel Reading John 9:1-41

(shorter form: John 9:1,6-9,13-17,34-38)

Jesus heals the man born blind and reveals himself to him as the Son of Man.



This Sunday's Readings

First Reading 1 Samuel 16:1b,6-7,10-13a Samuel is sent to anoint David as king.

Responsorial Psalm Psalm 23:1-6 The Lord is our shepherd.

Second Reading Ephesians 5:8-14 The Ephesians are told to live as children of light.

Gospel Reading John 9:1-41 (shorter form: John 9:1,6-9,13-17,34-38)

Jesus heals the man born blind and reveals himself to him as the Son of Man.

Background on the Gospel Reading

As we did last week, we are reading today from the **Gospel of John**.

In today's Gospel, the **healing of the man born blind** invites us to focus on **the physical and spiritual aspects of sight and light**.

In the first part of today's Gospel, we hear Jesus' response to a **prevalent belief of his time: that misfortune and disability were the result of sin**. That belief is why Jesus is asked the question of whose sin caused the man's blindness—his own or his parents'. Jesus does not answer directly, but instead gives the question an entirely different dimension—**through this man's disability, God's power will be made manifest. Jesus then heals the man**.

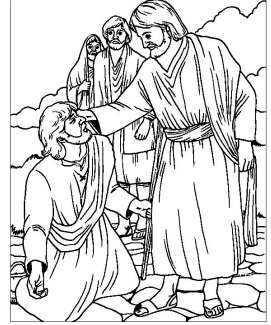
The healing is controversial because **Jesus heals on the Sabbath**. The Pharisees, the religious authorities of Jesus' time, understood that the **Law of Moses forbade work (including healing) on the Sabbath**. They also have trouble believing that Jesus performed a miracle. To determine **whether the man was really born blind**, the Pharisees question him and his parents. The man challenges the leaders of the synagogue about their assessment of the good that Jesus has done. In turn, they **expel the man for questioning their judgment**.

The final revelation and **moment of enlightenment** comes **when the man born blind encounters Jesus again**. Having heard the news of his expulsion, **Jesus** seeks out the man born blind and **reveals himself to him as the Son of Man**. In this moment, the man born blind shows himself to **be a man of faith and worships Jesus**. Jesus replies by identifying the irony of the experience of many who encounter Jesus: **Those who are blind will now see, and those who think they now see will be found to be blind.**

As in last week's Gospel about Jesus' encounter with the Samaritan woman, today's reading has many allusions to **Baptism**. The **washing of the man in the pool** of Siloam is a prototype for Christian Baptism. Through the man's encounter with Jesus, the man born blind is healed, his sight is restored, and his conversion to discipleship begins. **The man born blind gradually comes to a greater understanding about who Jesus is** and what it means to be his disciple, while the Pharisees (those who should see) are the ones who remain blind.

Fourth Sunday of Lent, Cycle A Making the Connection Family

Gospel Reading *John 9:1-41*
Jesus heals the man born blind and reveals
himself to him as the Son of Man



Family Connection

When infants are baptized, parents, with the help of the godparents, assume responsibility for raising the child as a follower of Jesus.

The process of maturation in the faith is much like the example found in the story of the man born blind. The man is cured of his blindness, a symbol of his sin.

Each time he meets someone after the healing, the man comes to a deeper awareness of who Jesus is.

In a similar way, we who are baptized continue to mature in faith as our relationship with and knowledge about Jesus grows.

Invite each member of your family to draw a timeline of his or her life. On the timelines, ask family members to identify significant moments in their lives, especially their life of faith.

Invite each person to reflect upon who Jesus was to him or her at each significant moment.

How has each person's relationship with Jesus changed or matured?

Then read together today's Gospel, John 9:1-41.

Note how the relationship between ***Jesus and the man born blind changes*** and grows throughout the Gospel.

Pray together that your relationship with Jesus will continue to grow and develop, becoming ever deeper.

Conclude by praying together the Lord's Prayer.

