

# St Luke the Evangelist, Blackburn South & St Timothy's, Forest Hill



## ONE MISSION, TWO CHURCHES

### The Journey Home

Fourth Sunday of Lent, Year A - 15th March 2026



Samuel 16:1,6-7,10-13, Psalm 22(23), Ephesians 5:8-14  
GOSPEL READING: **John 9:1-41**

*Meditation: Do you recognize the light of God's truth and power in your life? God wants to remove every obstacle that might hinder us from recognizing the light of his truth and wisdom for our lives. Saul, the first king of Israel, failed to recognize God's light and power to save him from his enemies. God replaced Saul with David, the youngest of Jesse's eight sons (1 Samuel 16). God saw something in David which Jesse and his other sons did not recognize - a man after God's own heart who delighted in doing what was pleasing to the Lord (1 Samuel 13:14). David was a man of courage and vision who defeated his enemies and united his people. His strength and success came not from himself but from God who anointed him with the power and wisdom of his own Spirit. What can keep us from the light of God's truth, wisdom, and strength for our lives? Sin blinds us and causes us to stumble and fall - unable to rise on our own or to walk in the freedom of God's love and truth. Sin clouds the mind in moral confusion, and it grows in darkness and resists the light of God's truth. Only God's light can uncover the darkness of sin and free us to walk in the path of holiness and peace with God.*



**The light of the world:** When the disciples saw a man who had been blind from birth, they asked Jesus what kind of sin had caused this blindness. The Jews had understood that many infirmities were the result of human folly and sin. While sin can lead to physical, mental, and spiritual infirmities, not all sickness is the direct result of sin. Sickness can befall us for a variety of reasons. Jesus answered that God had allowed this infirmity for a greater purpose which God wanted to demonstrate as a sign of his presence and power. Jesus then made a claim which only God could rightfully make. Jesus stated unequivocally, I am the light of the world (John 9:5). In so many words Jesus was saying that he is the one true source of power and light which sustains life and overcomes the darkness of sin, confusion, and spiritual blindness. Jesus' mighty works - his miraculous signs - confirmed the truth of his message and claim to divine authority and equality with his Father in heaven. One of his greatest signs was the healing of a man who had been blind from birth.

**Healing of man born blind:** When Jesus approached the blind man he first awakened hope in him - the hope which God offers those who seek his help. Jesus then did something quite remarkable for the blind man, both to identify with this man's misery and to draw expectant faith in him as well. Jesus touched the man's eyes with his own spittle mixed with dirt and bid him to wash in the Pool of Siloam which was close to the Temple. This pool of fresh flowing water was one of the landmarks of the city of Jerusalem. It's source came from the Gihon spring located in the valley outside the walls of Jerusalem. This pool was likely used as a ceremonial bath of purification for people who were going up to the Temple to worship. On the yearly feast of Tabernacles, one of the priests brought a golden pitcher of water from this pool and poured it out over the altar in the temple while reciting from the verse, "You will draw water from the wells of salvation" (Isaiah 12:3). What is the significance of the healing of the blind man at the Pool of Siloam? It is certainly more than just a miraculous event. It is a "sign" that points to the source of the miraculous life-giving water which Jesus offers through the gift and work of the Holy Spirit (John 7:38). Do you want the Holy Spirit to pour out on you his renewing power of faith, vision, and healing love? The Pharisees were upset with Jesus' miracle on two counts. First, he healed the blind man on the Sabbath, which they considered a serious violation of the command to rest on the Sabbath. Second, how could a "sinner" and a "sabbath-breaker" do such a marvelous work of God! The man who claimed to have been healed by Jesus must not have really been blind to begin with! Contrary to this false charge, the fact of this man's blindness was well known to many people, including the parents who testified under oath that he had indeed been blind since birth. The prejudice of the religious leaders made them blind to God's intention for the Sabbath (to do good rather than evil) and to Jesus' claim to be the One sent from the Father in heaven to bring freedom and light to his people. The Jewish leaders tried to intimidate both this cured man and his parents by threatening to exclude them from membership in the synagogue - the local congregation of the worshiping community of Jews. This man was shunned by the religious authorities because he believed that Jesus healed him and was the Messiah.

**Freedom from spiritual blindness:** Do you allow any blind-spots to blur your vision of what God is offering you and asking of you? The Lord Jesus is ever ready to heal us and to free us from the darkness of sin and deception. There is no sickness, whether physical, mental, emotional, or spiritual that the Lord Jesus does not identify with. Isaiah prophesied that the "Suffering Servant" would be bruised for our iniquities and by his stripes we would be healed (Isaiah 53:5). The Lord offers us freedom from spiritual blindness due to sin and he restores us to wholeness of body, mind, soul, and heart.

Jesus healing the Blind Man by Brian Jekel (2008) © Brian Jekel Artist  
Text © 2025 Servants of the Word, Don Schwager.

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Parish Office tel: 03 9412 8499; Presbytery tel: 03 9877 2292

St Luke the Evangelist, 46 Orchard Grove, Blackburn South

Email: foresthill@cam.org.au | Web: sttimothys.org.au / Email: blackburnsouth@cam.org.au | Web: blackburnsouth.org.au

**Parish Priest**

*Fr Alex Chow*

**Parish Secretary**

*Sonya O'Farrell*

*Wednesdays,*

*Thursdays & Fridays*

*10am – 2pm*

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**SUNDAY MASS**

***Saturday Vigil: 5pm (SL)***

***Sunday: 8:30am (SL)***

*10:30am (ST)*

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**WEEKDAY MASSES**

***Tues. 6:30pm (SL)***

***Wed. 9.15am (ST)***

*1st Wed Mass of Anointing @10am*

***Thurs. 9.15am (ST)***

***Fri. 9.15am(SL\*),***

*6.30pm (ST)*

***Sat. 9.15am (SL\*)***

*\*Rosary after Mass*

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**RECONCILIATION**

*SL: Tues 5:30 - 6:10pm*

*Sat 9:45 - 10:15am*

*Sat 4:30 - 4:50pm*

*ST: Fri 5:30 - 6:10pm*

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**EXPOSITION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT & EVENING PRAYER**

*SL: Tues 5:30 - 6:30pm*

*ST: Fri 5:30 - 6:30pm*

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**HOSPITALITY AFTER MASS AT ST. LUKE'S**

Second weekend of each month - bring a plate to share (optional)

**YOUNG ADULT GROUP -**

Saturday 21st March @11am, Lenten pilgrimage to the Our Lady of Victories of Victories Basilica in Camberwell



**30 APRIL 2026**

*Thinking about life, purpose, and what really matters.* If you're asking

big questions about faith or simply curious — you are very welcome.

**ALPHA Australian Edition, ALPHA Chinese Mandarin** (adults) and **ALPHA Youth** (ages 13–17) offer a relaxed, no-pressure space to connect with others, enjoy a free dinner, watch engaging short videos, and have honest conversations about life and faith. Come as you are, bring your questions, and see where the conversation leads. No pressure, no strings attached.

Email us at [Alphastlukesbbs@gmail.com](mailto:Alphastlukesbbs@gmail.com) or register your interest via the QR code  
We'd love to see you at Alpha!

**Next Week's Daily Readings 16 - 22 Mar**

**MONDAY Mar 16** Is 65:17-21  
Ps 29:2, 4-6, 11-13 Jn 4:43-54

**TUESDAY Mar 17** Jer1:4-9  
Ps 116 Acts 13:46-49 Lk 10:1-12, 17-20  
**ST PATRICK, bishop**

**WEDNESDAY Mar 18** Is 49:8-15  
Ps 144:8-9, 13-14, 17-18 Jn 5:17-30

**THURSDAY Mar 19** 2 Sam 7:4-5, 12-14, 16 Ps 88:2-5, 27, 29 Rom 4:13, 16-18, 22 Mt 1:16, 18-21, 24  
**ST JOSEPH, SPOUSE OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY**

**FRIDAY Mar 20** Wis 2:1, 12-22  
Ps 33:16, 18, 19-21, 23 Jn 7:1-2, 10, 25-30

**SATURDAY Mar 21** Jer 11:18-20 Ps 7:2-3, 9-12 Jn 7:40-52

**SUNDAY Mar 22** Ezek 37:12-14  
Ps 129: Rom 8:8-11 Jn 11:1-45

**FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT**

**ALTAR SERVING MINISTRY**

Are you interested in assisting as an altar server? If so, or if you have any questions about this ministry, please contact Chris Lim on 0419 470 267

**MINISTERS OF THE WORD**

Saturday 5pm SL  
Sunday 8:30am SL  
10:30am ST

**14 and 15 MAR**

Lucy Ferris  
Shirley Prabha  
Anne Lim

**21 and 22 MAR**

Marg Yore  
Lucas Thong  
Sarah Ahmed

**EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS OF THE EUCHARIST**

Saturday 5pm SL  
Sunday 8:30am SL  
10:30am ST

Corey Thong  
Beryl Chelliah  
Chin L Tay

Lucy Ferris  
Melina Barcellona  
Anico Yee

**SLIDE OPERATORS**

Saturday 5pm SL  
Sunday 8:30am SL  
10:30am ST

Choir  
Rosemary Donaldson  
Manny Gonzalez

Choir  
David Prabha  
Lee Min Yee

**SL WELCOMERS 14 - 15 Mar**

5pm Libby Theodore  
8.30am Margaret Gearon  
10.30am Volunteer

**SL CHURCH CLEANING**

4th April - Megan's team  
Megan McLean, Janette Clark,  
Maureen Davis & Quyen Nguyen

**SL CHURCH FLOWERS**

No flowers for Lent

**ST CHURCH FLOWERS**

No flowers for Lent

**ST COUNTERS**

This week Team 6:  
Barry Silvester & Chris Lim  
Next week Team 7:  
Fela Colasanti & Chin L Tay

**SL WELCOMERS 21 - 22 Mar**

5:00pm Volunteer  
8.30am Marie Pekish  
10.30am Volunteer

**ST CHURCH CLEANING**

20th March  
Liliana Restrepo & Jackie Kha

## WE REMEMBER IN PRAYER

**All who are sick**, especially Brian Koh, Brian McHugh, Suzy Bookluck, Emilio Moreno Garcia, Agatha Wink, Chris Leach, Dora Leung, Hazel Greal, Josephine Alexander, Grace Dimattina, Kit Bing Fan, Kathryn Holmes, Stewart Davis, Mark, Margaret Hayes, Charmaine Bancroft, Marilene Japour, Paciencia Cabral and all those parishioners unable to be among us this weekend.

**All who have died**, and those whose anniversaries occur about this time especially Elsie Carr, Florence Lloyd, Carmine Rizzuto, John Collins, Inge Cammans, Gwendoline Fuller, James Thomas, Luisa Cigana, Reginald Peters, Sarah Smith, Ona Kilby, Mary McLoney, Sr Anne Dynon, Noreen Taylor, Cheryl Taylor & Giuseppe Cigana.  
May they rest in peace.

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## POPE LEO'S PRAYER INTENTION FOR MARCH:

For disarmament and peace. Let us pray that nations move toward effective disarmament, particularly nuclear disarmament, and that world leaders choose the path of dialogue and diplomacy instead of violence.

## STATIONS OF THE CROSS FOR LENT:

**St Luke's, Blackburn South:** Tuesdays @ 5.30pm including confession & adoration, followed by 6.30pm Mass and Fridays at 3pm (followed by the Divine Mercy Chaplet)

**St Timothy's, Forest Hill:** Fridays @ 5.30pm including confession & adoration, followed by 6.30pm Mass.

**PARISH & SCHOOL FETE:** Our first fete meeting was held on Feb. 19th and the plans are underway. Dates for the next two meetings are Thurs. 19<sup>th</sup> March and Thurs. 23<sup>rd</sup> April, both at 7pm in the St Luke's parish hall kitchen. **More volunteers are very welcome to join us**, as many hands make light work!

**SAFEGUARDING ESSENTIALS TRAINING:** All church volunteers must complete this training which can be done online via this link: [Safeguarding Essentials training module | Melbourne Catholic](#) Please email your certificate to the parish office when you receive it.

**HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE:** Please see back page of the newsletter.

Resources ....

**MELBOURNE CATHOLIC:** [Archbishop convokes Melbourne Synod](#)

**MAJELLAN MEDIA:** [Pope calls for peace](#)

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## **STEWARDSHIP CORNER:**

*The First collection is for the priest and retired priests.*

*The Second collection is for parish expenses.*

Please note that collection totals will no longer be published each week in the newsletter. Presbytery and Church donations will be reported on a monthly basis at all weekend Masses. To donate regularly via envelope, credit card or bank account, please contact the parish office.

## Parish Groups & Contacts

### **Volunteers and Rosters:**

*Kelvin & Susan Chen (ST),  
Margaret Gearon (SL)*

**Baptism Preparation:** *Fr Alex*

### **Parish Collection Preparers**

*ST: Barry Silvester &  
Michael Kawalewski*

### **Parish Safeguarding Committee**

*Fr Alex, Sonya O'Farrell,  
Darren McLean & Janette Clark*

### **Parish History**

*SL: Margaret Gearon*

### **Parish Accountant**

*Bernard Negline*

### **SL & ST: Hall Hire**

*Sonya O'Farrell @ 9877 2292*

### **Church Sacristan**

*ST: Roster of Parishioners  
SL: Greg Grant*

### **Church Cleaning & Flowers**

*SL: Megan McLean  
ST: Susan Chen*

**Church Linen:** *SL: Beryl Chelliah*

### **Parish Garden Maintenance**

*ST: Des Connors  
SL: Darren McLean*

### **Parish Choirs**

*ST: Miguel Ilagan  
SL: Fr Alex*

**Bible Timeline:** *Chris Lim*

**ALPHA:** *Lynda Kilroe-Smith*

### **Young Adult Ministry:**

*Sarah Santilli & Jersy Soesanto*

**RCIA:** *David West*

### **St Vincent de Paul Conference**

*For Assistance: 1800 305 330  
(Monday to Friday 10am-3pm)  
ST: John McCoy  
SL: Margaret Gearon &  
Steve Kilroe-Smith*

**Entrance Antiphon:** Rejoice, Jerusalem, and all who love her. Be joyful, all who were in mourning; exult and be satisfied at her consoling breast.

**Response to the Psalm:** The Lord is my shepherd; there is nothing I shall want.

**Gospel Acclamation:** Glory to you, Word of God, Lord Jesus Christ! I am the light of the world, says the Lord; whoever follows me will have the light of life. Glory to you, Word of God, Lord Jesus Christ!

**Eucharistic Acclamation:** We proclaim your Death, O Lord, and profess your Resurrection until you come again.

**Communion Antiphon:** The Lord anointed my eyes: I went, I washed, I saw and I believed in God.

## CHILDREN'S LITURGY

**ST TIMOTHY'S:** Sunday 22nd March at the 10.30am Mass. This will run on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Sundays of each month.



**ST LUKE'S:** Saturday 14th March at the 5pm Mass. This will run on the 2nd Saturday of each month.

## HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE

### **PALM SUNDAY:**

05:00pm Vigil Mass at St Luke's (28/3)  
08.30am Mass at St Luke's (29/3)  
10.30am Mass at St Timothy's (29/3)

**HOLY THURSDAY:** 7.30pm at St Timothy's (2/4) followed by Adoration and Night Prayer 'til 9:30pm

### **GOOD FRIDAY:**

10.30am Stations of the Cross at St Timothy's (3/4)  
03:00pm Passion of our Lord at St Luke's (3/4) followed by Confession (till 5:30pm)

**EASTER VIGIL:** 7.30pm at St Luke's (4/4)

### **EASTER SUNDAY:**

08.30am\* Mass at St Luke's (5/4)  
10.30am\* Mass at St Timothy's (5/4)

*\*Hot cross buns, tea & coffee after mass*

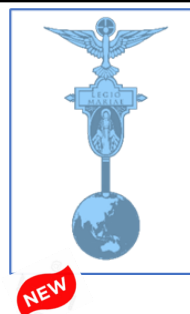
## SACRAMENTAL DATES FOR 2026

**First Reconciliation** - May 26<sup>th</sup> & 27<sup>th</sup> from 3.30 to 5.30pm

**Confirmation** - June 25<sup>th</sup> @ 6pm

**First Eucharist** - August 1<sup>st</sup> @ 5pm

Parents of children who do not attend Catholic schools are asked to contact the parish office asap to enrol in preparation sessions for any of the above sacraments.



## LEGION OF MARY

The first Legion of Mary Praesidium meeting will be on Friday 27<sup>th</sup> March 2026 @10:30am.

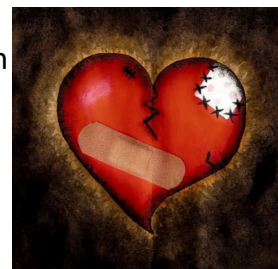
Please join us for 9:15am Mass at St Luke the Evangelist church.

To find out more, please contact Lucy Ferris at [lucyfe1112@gmail.com](mailto:lucyfe1112@gmail.com) or 0419 591 423.

## MERCY NIGHT

St Luke the Evangelist Church  
Tues. 24 March 2026

6:30pm Mass  
7pm to Adoration &  
8:30pm Reconciliation



Come, reflect and experience an evening of God's merciful and forgiving love in the God's presence and Sacrament of Reconciliation.

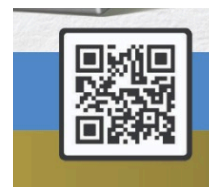
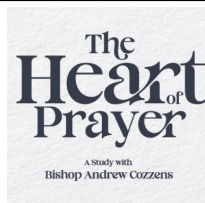
(Note: **NO 5:30pm Holy Hour on this date**)



## "SYNOD CORNER"

### 1. What is a Synod?

A Synod is a moment when the Church deliberately pauses to listen, pray, and discern together. It is not simply a meeting or a conference, but a spiritual process rooted in faith that the Holy Spirit continues to guide the Church today. In a Synod, we ask not only "What do we think?" but more importantly, "What is God asking of us at this moment in our mission?"



This Lenten online 8 session retreat 'The Heart of Prayer' with Bishop Andrew Cozzens, offers contemplative, practical guidance from Scripture and the saints to deepen prayer, quiet the heart and help you to hear God's voice clearly. Scan QR code or login to Formed.org to watch this series that reveal the beauty and power of prayer, while offering guidance that is practical and down-to-earth. Experience this Lent with hearts transformed the joy of Easter.

<https://app.formed.org/app/collections/1473553>

# Jesus heals the blind man



4th Sunday of Lent, Year A

Draw the story of Jesus healing the blind man



Jesus smears mud on the eyes of a man who was born blind.

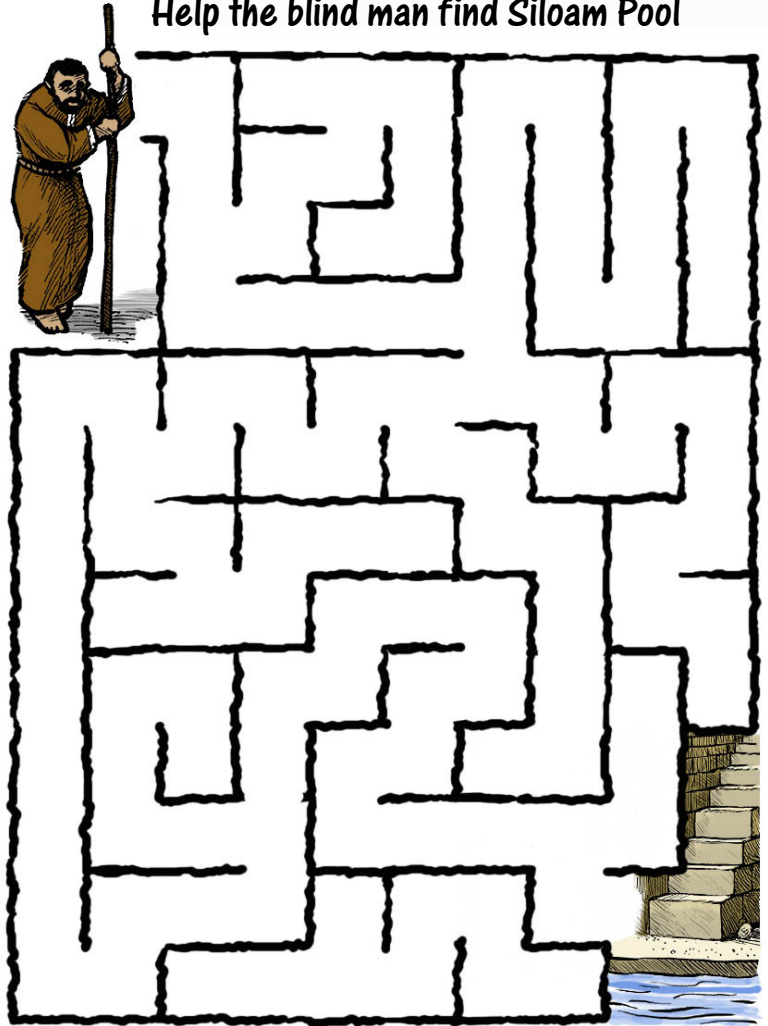


The blind man washes in Siloam pool and is able to see.



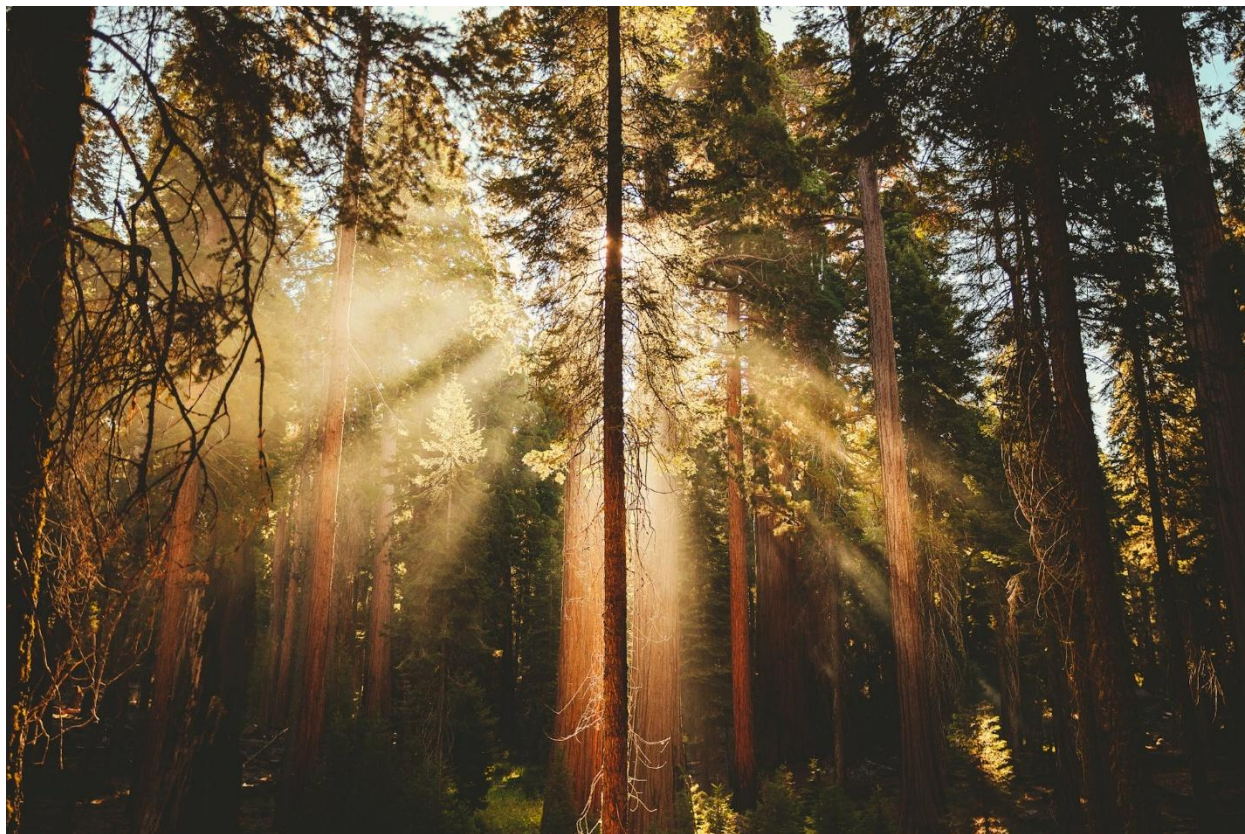
The man is happy now he can see.  
Many people could not believe what had happened.

Help the blind man find Siloam Pool



When he met Jesus again, the man who had been blind put his faith in Jesus and worshipped him.  
What can we do to show that we believe in Jesus?

# FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT – 15 MARCH 2026



## COLLECT

O God, who through your Word  
reconcile the human race to yourself in a wonderful way,  
grant, we pray,  
that with prompt devotion and eager faith  
the Christian people may hasten  
toward the solemn celebrations to come.  
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God, for ever and ever.  
Amen.

## READINGS AND REFLECTIONS

Last week, WATER. This week, LIGHT. Next week, LIFE. Three great Lenten gospels.

Light is a powerful symbol both at Eastertime and in our baptism. The Easter Vigil will begin around the holy bonfire with the lighting of the Paschal candle, symbol of the light of Christ. Then, in our baptism rites, each candidate is presented with a candle lit from the Easter candle.

## A reading from the book of Samuel

16:1, 6-7, 10-13

The Lord said to Samuel, 'Fill your horn with oil and go. I am sending you to Jesse of Bethlehem, for I have chosen myself a king among his sons.' When Samuel arrived, he caught sight of Eliab and thought, 'Surely the Lord's anointed one stands there before him,' but the Lord said to Samuel, 'Take no notice of his appearance or his height for I have rejected him; God does not see as man sees; man looks at appearances, but the Lord looks at the heart.' Jesse presented his seven sons to Samuel, but Samuel said to Jesse, 'The Lord has not chosen these.' He then asked Jesse, 'Are these all the sons you have?' He answered, 'There is still one left, the youngest; he is out looking after the sheep.' Then Samuel said to Jesse, 'Send for him; we will not sit down to eat until he comes.' Jesse had him sent for, a boy of fresh complexion, with fine eyes and pleasant bearing. The Lord said, 'Come, anoint him, for this is the one.' At this, Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him where he stood with his brothers; and the spirit of the Lord seized on David and stayed with him from that day on.

## Responsorial Psalm

Ps 22

**R.** The Lord is my shepherd;  
there is nothing I shall want.

The Lord is my shepherd;  
there is nothing I shall want.  
Fresh and green are the pastures  
where he gives me repose.  
Near restful waters he leads me,  
to revive my drooping spirit. **R.**

He guides me along the right path;  
he is true to his name.  
If I should walk in the valley of darkness  
no evil would I fear.  
You are there with your crook and your staff;  
with these you give me comfort. **R.**

You have prepared a banquet for me  
in the sight of my foes.  
My head you have anointed with oil;  
my cup is overflowing. **R.**

Surely goodness and kindness shall follow me  
all the days of my life.  
In the Lord's own house shall I dwell  
for ever and ever. **R.**

## First Reading

A surprising story of God's mysterious designs. The king, the Lord's anointed one, had been chosen by God from among the sons of Jesse of Bethlehem. However, none of Jesse's seven sons is recognised as God's chosen one. But there is one left, the youngest, who is out looking after the sheep. This is David. He is anointed king. God's ways are not ours – God looks at the heart. The text is highly significant because Christ will be born in Bethlehem in the line of King David. It links with the gospel by asking how we 'see' with the heart.

The exclusive language can be avoided by reading: *God does not see as humans see; they look at appearances...* Read the story with wonder and try to bring out the extraordinary choice of a young shepherd boy to be king.

## Responsorial Psalm

Psalm 22/23 resonates with the first reading and the choice of the shepherd boy, David, as the one to be anointed king. He will rule in God's name – in the name of God who shepherds his people, giving them rest and renewal, light and comfort. They will be blessed with goodness and kindness.

The anointing with oil here has a more general meaning than we saw in the ritual of appointing David as king. Here it refers to God's generous hospitality at the banquet prepared for us.

The psalm is well-known and well-loved, but take care with the two six-line stanzas.

**A reading from the letter of St Paul  
to the Ephesians 5:8-14**

You were darkness once, but now you are light in the Lord; be like children of light, for the effects of the light are seen in complete goodness and right living and truth. Try to discover what the Lord wants of you, having nothing to do with the futile works of darkness but exposing them by contrast. The things which are done in secret are things that people are ashamed even to speak of; but anything exposed by the light will be illuminated and anything illuminated turns into light. That is why it is said:

Wake up from your sleep,  
rise from the dead,  
and Christ will shine on you.

**A reading from the holy Gospel  
according to John 9:1-41**

As Jesus went along, he saw a man who had been blind from birth. [His disciples asked him, 'Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, for him to have been born blind?' 'Neither he nor his parents sinned,' Jesus answered, 'he was born blind so that the works of God might be displayed in him. 'As long as the day lasts, I must carry out the work of the one who sent me; the night will soon be here when no one can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.'

Having said this,] he spat on the ground, made a paste with the spittle, put this over the eyes of the blind man and said to him, 'Go and wash in the Pool of Siloam' (a name that means 'sent'). So the blind man went off and washed himself, and came away with his sight restored.

His neighbours and people who earlier had seen him begging said, 'Isn't this the man who used to sit and beg?' Some said, 'Yes, it is the same one.' Others said, 'No, he only looks like him.' The man himself said, 'I am the man.' [So they said to him, 'Then how do your eyes come to be open?' 'The man called Jesus' he answered 'made a paste, daubed my eyes with it and said to me, "Go and wash at Siloam"; so I went, and when I washed I could see.' They asked, 'Where is he?' 'I don't know' he answered.]

They brought the man who had been blind to the Pharisees. It had been a sabbath day when Jesus made the paste and opened the man's eyes, so when the Pharisees asked him how he had come to see, he said, 'He put a paste on my eyes, and I washed, and I can see.' Then some of

**Second Reading**

This is a beautiful and accessible text exploring light and darkness. Associated with this contrast are goodness/right living/truth on the one hand, and futility/ secret/shame on the other. Paul urges us to embrace the light which is Christ shining upon us. In fact, he begins by affirming that the darkness we once were is now dispelled by the light of the Lord. Christ defines our identity – be what you are, says Paul.

The reading is a good introduction to the gospel of the man born blind who comes to see, with its triumphant affirmation on Jesus' part: *I am the light of the world!* As in the first reading, we need to 'see' with the heart: *Try to discover what the Lord wants of you...*

The passage should be read with energy and a tone of exhortation.

**Gospel**

This is an amazing saga of healing a blind beggar which keeps looping back upon itself. It moves from Jesus with the disciples, to the neighbours/bystanders, to the Pharisees, to the man's parents, back to the Pharisees, and finally to a personal encounter between Jesus and the man whose sight was given him.

Various themes wind their way through the narrative. There is the question of sin: is the man's blindness caused by sin (the man's or his parents')? Jesus is accused of being a sinner because he has violated the Sabbath – yet his healing power comes from God. The man born blind throws this back at the pharisees who then dismiss him as a sinner.

The question of *how* this has happened recurs repeatedly. The action is first described and then recounted by the man to both the neighbours and to the pharisees. The 'how' question comes back four times, much to the man's frustration. The reader should not shy away from these repetitions – they reinforce the message.

Most importantly, this is not just a story of a man gaining his physical sight. It is a story of someone who comes to see and understand who Jesus is. At the mid-point of the story, the man born blind can say Jesus is a prophet. Then in the second half, the contrast is developed between the man who has come to see himself as a disciple and the pharisees who refuse absolutely to recognise where Christ has come from. The man witnesses to Jesus' divine origin and is firmly rejected by the pharisees. At the end, in the personal conversation with Jesus, the man is able to say, *Lord I believe!*

the Pharisees said, 'This man cannot be from God: he does not keep the sabbath.' Others said, 'How could a sinner produce signs like this?' And there was disagreement among them. So they spoke to the blind man again, 'What have you to say about him yourself, now that he has opened your eyes?' 'He is a prophet' replied the man.

[However, the Jews would not believe that the man had been blind and had gained his sight, without first sending for his parents and asking them, 'Is this man really your son who you say was born blind? If so, how is it that he is now able to see?' His parents answered, 'We know he is our son and we know he was born blind, but we don't know how it is that he can see now, or who opened his eyes. He is old enough: let him speak for himself.' His parents spoke like this out of fear of the Jews, who had already agreed to expel from the synagogue anyone who should acknowledge Jesus as the Christ. This was why his parents said, 'He is old enough; ask him.'

So the Jews again sent for the man and said to him, 'Give glory to God! For our part, we know that this man is a sinner.' The man answered, 'I don't know if he is a sinner; I only know that I was blind and now I can see.' They said to him, 'What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?' He replied, 'I have told you once and you wouldn't listen. Why do you want to hear it all again? Do you want to become his disciples too?' At this they hurled abuse at him: 'You can be his disciple,' they said 'we are disciples of Moses: we know that God spoke to Moses, but as for this man, we don't know where he comes from.' The man replied, 'Now here is an astonishing thing! He has opened my eyes, and you don't know where he comes from! We know that God doesn't listen to sinners, but God does listen to men who are devout and do his will. Ever since the world began it is unheard of for anyone to open the eyes of a man who was born blind; if this man were not from God, he couldn't do a thing.' 'Are you trying to teach us,' they replied 'and you a sinner through and through, since you were born!' And they drove him away. Jesus heard they had driven him away, and when he found him he said to him, 'Do you believe in the Son of Man?' 'Sir,' the man replied 'tell me who he is so that I may believe in him.' Jesus said, 'You are looking at him; he is speaking to you.' The man said, 'Lord, I believe', and worshipped him.

[Jesus said: 'It is for judgement that I have come into this world, so that those without sight may

The reading ends with an epilogue on the real meaning of 'seeing'. Those who claim to have spiritual sight do not recognise Jesus. Seeing with the heart is recognising/encountering Jesus as the Christ. This is why it is such a key text in the Lenten journey of both the elect and the baptised. As washing in the Pool of Siloam gave the man his sight; so our washing in the water of the baptismal font gives us insight.

see and those with sight turn blind.’ Hearing this, some Pharisees who were present said to him, ‘We are not blind, surely?’ Jesus replied: ‘Blind? If you were, you would not be guilty, but since you say, “We see”, your guilt remains.’]

[Short Form: omit text in brackets.]

# CONCLUDING PRAYER

## Prayer over the People (4 LENT)

Look upon those who call to you, O Lord,  
and sustain the weak;  
give life by your unfailing light  
to those who walk in the shadow of death,  
and bring those rescued by your mercy from every evil  
to reach the highest good.  
Through Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

And may the blessing of almighty God,  
the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit,  
come down on us and remain with us for ever.

**Amen.**

(Adapted from the Prayer over the People for the Fourth Sunday of Lent, Roman Missal p. 272)



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2026

