

**Sunday, March 19, 2023**

**The Fourth Sunday of Lent**

- 1) 1 Samuel 16:1b, 6-7, 10-13a
- 2) Ephesians 5:8-14
- 3) John 9:1-41 or 9:1, 6-9, 13-17, 34-38

**FOCUS:** The blind man's conversion of heart stands in stark contrast to the stubborn blindness of the Pharisees.

Observing how a blind person negotiates his or her way through life is inspiring. Observing blindness of heart, however, is troubling. Those who are blind to the truth often stumble through life because of obstacles they place in their own paths. When we seek the truth of the Gospel, we are like the blind man who came to believe in the Son of Man.

**LITURGY OF THE WORD**

At first, Samuel judges by appearances, then he is reminded by God to judge the heart in order to find a worthy candidate to anoint as king. Saint Paul challenges us to live as *children of light*. In the Gospel, we have a man, blind from birth, move from seeing Jesus as a prophet to seeing Jesus as the Promised One, while the blindness of the Pharisees remains.

**UNIVERSAL PRAYER**

**PRIEST:** Seeking to eradicate our own spiritual blindness, let us petition our loving God to fill our hearts with his light.

- 1) For Pope Francis, our clergy and all pastoral leaders, may they help us to embrace the Light of Christ with all our hearts, let us pray to the Lord.
- 2) For leaders of nations, may they shed any blindness to seeking power which impedes them from serving the needs of all the people entrusted to their care, let us pray to the Lord.
- 3) For those who struggle with disabilities, may they receive whatever assistance they need to fully share their gifts and talents with others, let us pray to the Lord.
- 4) For the Elect and candidates preparing to receive the Easter sacraments, may the anticipated joy of being one with Christ strengthen their resolve to be children of the Light, let us pray to the Lord
- 5) For those who have died and faithfully carried their crosses through life, may they share in the victory won by Jesus in heaven, let us pray to the Lord.
- 6) (Special petition/s)

**PRIEST:** O God of Abraham and Father of Jesus, hear our prayer as we seek your wisdom and guidance. Grant us greater clarity of spiritual sight and draw us ever closer to you. We pray through Christ our Lord.