THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT
MARCH 22, 2020
“ I am the light of the world. ”
(John 9:5)
As Jesus passed by he saw a man blind from birth. He spat on the ground and made clay with the saliva, and smeared the clay on his eyes, and said to him, “Go wash in the Pool of Siloam” — which means Sent —. So he went and washed, and came back able to see. His neighbors and those who had seen him earlier as a beggar said, “Isn’t this the one who used to sit and beg?” Some said, “It is, “ but others said, “No, he just looks like him.” He said, “I am.” They brought the one who was once blind to the Pharisees. Now Jesus had made clay and opened his eyes on a sabbath. So then the Pharisees also asked him how he was able to see. He said to them, “He put clay on my eyes, and I washed, and now I can see.” So some of the Pharisees said, “This man is not from God, because he does not keep the sabbath.” But others said, “How can a sinful man do such signs?” And there was a division among them. So they said to the blind man again, “What do you have to say about him, since he opened your eyes?” He said, “He is a prophet.” They answered and said to him, “You were born totally in sin, and are you trying to teach us?” Then they threw him out. When Jesus heard that they had thrown him out, he found him and said, “Do you believe in the Son of Man?” He answered and said, “Who is he, sir, that I may believe in him?” Jesus said to him, “You have seen him, and the one speaking with you is he.” He said, “I do believe, Lord,” and he worshiped him.
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.

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**PRAY FOR THE SICK**

Kathy Nebel, Sylvia Ho, Conception Huezo, Ray & Alice Conner, Connie Trias, Claire Luna-Fernandez, Mario & Emma Dolor, Bertha Baldauf, Amy Kueck, Jovita Domingo, Carol Wagner, Julian Martinez, Virginia Cabaddu, Nena Davi, Danny Muly, Michelle McLaughlin, Miguel Ortiz and all those in the Parish who are sick, and all those listed in the Book of Intentions.

**STEWARDSHIP/FINANCE**

**Sunday Plate March 15:** $3,169.00

**Maintenance Fund:** $1,277.00

*Thank you for your contribution support to sustain the ministries & ongoing needs of our parish.*

Please make all checks payable to either “OLQW” or Our Lady Queen of the World for both first and second collections. Also please put your envelope number on the Memo line.

**Lenten Schedule for RCIA**

March 29: Mass @ 10:00 am
April 2: Chrism Mass @ Cathedral of Light @ 6:00 pm
April 11: RCIA Liturgy at Easter Vigil

Please continue to pray for our Catechumens and candidates as they now enter into a period of deeper formation in the RCIA process.
PARISH EVENTS

BAPTISM CLASS

Cancelled until further notice

STATIONS OF THE CROSS

Our Lenten tradition of praying The Stations of the Cross will continue every Friday during Lent at 7:00 pm in the Church. All are invited. to come and enter into the Passion of our Lord.

ST. PATRICK’S DAY DINNER

For St. Patrick's Day Dinner ticket refund or donation, please contact Patrick Embody at (925) 234-3975 or fsbbc7164@gmail.com. If we do not hear from you by March 27, we will consider your refund a donation. Thank you

ST. VINCENT DE PAUL

FOOD DRIVE

We will maintain a donation barrel for non-perishable foods in the church foyer; please be generous. Our groups of volunteers are here every Monday, and they always need groceries to help the needy in our community. The demand has been much greater!

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

EASTER SUNDAY EGG HUNT

On Easter Sunday, April 12th, the Confirmation/Youth Group will sponsor an Easter Egg Hunt after the 12 noon mass in the Parish Grounds.

We need donation of Plastic Eggs in a variety of sizes and candies and prizes. Please bring them to the CCD Office during CCD hours on Saturday or Monday or bring them to the Rectory during Rectory Office hours no later than April 4, 2020.

Your donation is much appreciated by the Youth Group and the parish.

ONLINE MASSES AND OTHER LITURGICAL RESOURCES

Daily Scripture readings from the US Conference of Catholic Bishops in English and Español

Mass celebrated by Pope Francis in Italian (original sound) - https://www.vaticannews.va/en/pope-francis/mass-casa-santa-marta.html

Please also check if your local parish is livestreaming or posting videos of Mass.

There are several entities providing Mass on the internet. Check the websites regarding whether the Mass is livestreamed or available on demand.

Daily Mass (including Sunday)
Archdiocese of Boston CatholicTV - http://www.catholictv.org/masses/catholictv-mass
Archdiocese of New Orleans - https://thedailymass.com/mass/
EWTN - http://ewtn.com
Relevant Radio (audio only) - http://relevantradio.com/
Sunday Mass
Catholic Extension Society -- https://www.catholicextension.org/stories/sunday-catholic-mass-online

SOLAR SYSTEM

The Maintenance Fund 2nd collection will be for the Solar System. Your generosity is greatly appreciated. Thank you.

Contribution statements are now available.

On your contribution envelopes, please indicate that you need a statement or come by the rectory to pick up a copy.
The Church will remain open during these difficult times to provide a place of prayer and solace. All public Masses are suspended until further notice.

MESSAGE FROM BISHOP BARBER:

In collaboration with local Bay Area officials, and in service to the common good of our communities and our country, the Diocese of Oakland is immediately putting into effect the following actions:

All public Masses are suspended. Priests are receiving specific guidance from Bishop Michael Barber, SJ, regarding the celebration of sacraments, including baptisms, weddings and funerals.

Churches will remain open to provide a place of prayer and solace for people. Proper hygiene and social distancing will continue to be emphasized per CDC guidelines.

All other events at parishes and schools are to be postponed, rescheduled or cancelled until further notice.

All chancery employees are to remain at home during this period. They are being compensated as normal. Those who can work remotely are required to do so. Those whose job responsibilities do not allow them to work remotely are required to stay in communication with their team or supervisor. Parishes are strongly encouraged to follow a similar approach with their employees.

In issuing these new guidelines Bishop Michael Barber stated, “Our Lady, Health of the Sick, has always come to the aid of the Church in times of plague, pestilence and danger. Let us pray to her to intercede for us with her Son.”

2020 BISHOP’S APPEAL

The 2020 Bishop’s Appeal has begun. Bishop Michael C. Barber, S.J. decided to continue with the theme, Rebuild My Church, a phrase inspired by St. Francis of Assisi. By sharing our talent and treasure with our sisters and brothers, we are making a sacrifice and returning to God a small portion of the many gifts he has given to us.

By embracing Rebuild My Church, you are contributing greatly to building up the Kingdom of God here in the East Bay. We are asked to pray for our fellow parishioners, clergy, leadership, and those served by the ministries offered by the Church, and for the success of the 2020 Bishop’s Appeal. All gifts to the Appeal are equally important. As stewards of our faith we are asked to make a sacrificial, proportionate and thoughtful gift. Those who are blessed with more are challenged to give more, but everyone is asked to respond.

Imagine what can be done in the name of our local faith community if every parishioner were inspired by Rebuild My Church and participated in our annual Bishop’s Appeal. While parishes rely on the financial support of parishioners through weekly offertory collections, the diocese also relies on these same parishioners to make possible the many services it provides to literally thousands of individuals each year.

The Bishop’s Appeal provides funds to help offset some of the following programmatic expenses:

- Parishes & Schools in Need
- Clergy Formation & Support
- Religious Education & Faith Formation
- Pastoral Ministries & Services
- Priest Retirement & Care

Jesus Christ promised us at His Ascension: "I will be with you all days until the end of the ages." If Christ has helped you and your family, if He has been generous to you, will you consider sharing some of the blessings you have received with Christ and His Church?

Thank you for your prayers and gifts!

Our Lady Queen of the World’s 2020 goal is $19,600.
Pope Francis’ Prayer to Mary during Coronavirus Pandemic

O Mary,
you always shine on our path
as a sign of salvation and of hope.
We entrust ourselves to you, Health of the Sick,
who at the cross took part in Jesus' pain, keeping your faith firm.
You, Salvation of the Roman People,
know what we need,
and we are sure you will provide
so that, as in Cana of Galilee,
we may return to joy and to feasting
after this time of trial.
Help us, Mother of Divine Love,
to conform to the will of the Father
and to do as we are told by Jesus,
who has taken upon himself our sufferings
and carried our sorrows
to lead us, through the cross,
to the joy of the resurrection. Amen.

Under your protection, we seek refuge, Holy Mother of God. Do not disdain the entreaties of we who are in trial, but deliver us from every danger, O glorious and blessed Virgin.
The best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to this virus.

- The virus is thought to spread mainly from person-to-person, between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet), through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes. These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs.

- Older adults and people who have severe underlying chronic medical conditions like heart or lung disease or diabetes seem to be at higher risk for developing more serious complications from COVID-19 illness. Please consult with your health care provider about additional steps you may be able to take to protect yourself.

- Contra Costa Health Services does not recommend wearing a mask to avoid becoming infected with a respiratory disease. Masks can be effective when worn by someone who is already sick to prevent the spread of their disease.

Take Steps to Protect Yourself

Clean Your Hands Often
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds especially after you have been in a public place, or after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
- If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.

Avoid close contact
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick
- Put distance between yourself and other people if COVID-19 is spreading in your community. This is especially important for people who are at higher risk of getting very sick.

Take Steps to Protect Others

Stay home if you’re sick
- Stay home if you are sick, except to get medical care. Learn what to do if you are sick.

Cover coughs and sneezes
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze or use the inside of your elbow.
- Throw used tissues in the trash.
- Immediately wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not readily available, clean your hands with a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.

If you are sick, wear a facemask
- If you are sick: You should wear a facemask when you are around other people (e.g., sharing a room or vehicle) and before you enter a healthcare provider’s office. If you are not able to wear a facemask (for example, because it causes trouble breathing), then you should do your best to cover your coughs and sneezes, and people who are caring for you should wear a facemask if they enter your room. Learn what to do if you are sick.
- If you are NOT sick: You do not need to wear a facemask unless you are caring for someone who is sick (and they are not able to wear a facemask). Facemasks may be in short supply and they should be saved for caregivers.

Clean and disinfect
- Clean AND disinfect frequently touched surfaces daily. This includes tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets, and sinks.
- If surfaces are dirty, clean them: Use detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention