

Fourth Sunday of Lent 2017

When I was in High School, we had to read certain classic novels like "the Scarlet Letter", "the Deer Slayer" ( I never liked that one!) and "The Little Prince". The quote I will always remember from that book is "It is only with the heart that one sees rightly. What is essential is invisible to the eye."

I think that is the main message from today's readings  
It's all about seeing as God sees. How does God see ?

In the first reading, God sends the prophet Samuel to the family of Jesse to choose one of his sons to be the next king of Israel. Jesse must be honored to present the brightest and best of his 8 sons to the man of God. The eldest comes forward, obviously the logical choice. But God does not choose him. After seeing all 7 of the sons, Samuel asks. "Are these all the sons you have?" (Don't you wonder what Jesse might be thinking?? )

He says, "Well, there's one more, but he's just a kid. He's out watching the sheep." And guess what? He is the one God wants. He becomes the great King David.

You do not see as God sees. You look at appearances, but God looks into the heart.

The gospel is all about seeing. Here we are in the middle of Lent and in the middle of 3 great readings about who Jesus is.

Last week the woman came to faith in Jesus. What she had been looking for was right before her eyes. ...Not in the well water, but in the LIVING WATER.

Today a man comes to faith in Jesus when he opens his eyes to see who is standing before him, ... the LIGHT OF THE WORLD.

Next week, we will see Lazarus step out of the darkness and death of the tomb. He will hear the voice of Jesus calling him to life.

But back to today. How do we see as God sees?

God sees that all things are connected to one another.

That we are connected to one another.

We often see divisions and differences.

We label people. We judge right away before finding out who they are.  
Jesus never did that. He looked into their heart.

In the Gospel, Jesus walks along and he SEES the MAN  
He doesn't see a BLIND MAN.. He sees a MAN who happens to be BLIND.  
There is a difference.

In other miracle stories a person asks for healing...

"Lord, that I may see."

" Lord, come and heal my daughter."

But here, Jesus doesn't wait for the request. He REACHES OUT TO HIM."

Jesus makes clay for his eyes. Where else did we see God making clay?

It was the clay of the ground that created Adam. And now, Jesus wants to  
make this man whole.

Jesus sends him to the water, just like baptism, and his eyes are opened.

The Pharisees are spiritually blind. They are looking in the wrong place.

They are looking for someone to blame for the man's blindness.

(Who sinned? He or his parents? )

They are looking for a reason to discount Jesus who broke the Sabbath.

They are looking for a reason to keep the man excluded

The Pharisees want a world of divisions. Who is in and who is out.

Jesus invites the man in. He brings him back.

When Jesus finds that the man has been kicked out of the synagogue, He comes  
looking for him. He invites him into faith. And the man makes the deepest and  
most beautiful statement. "I do believe.!"

Often blindness in the Gospels was a symbol for spiritual blindness...

We don't see. We can't believe. Something has clouded our vision.

The church father Origen said. " To be holy is to see with the eyes of Christ."

There was a song in the 60's, (dates me) "Everything is Beautiful in its own way."

And we sing: "There is none so blind as he who will not see!")

The Pharisees could physically see, but were blind to the love of Christ.

The man was physically blind, but he now walks in the light...the light of faith

It's all about seeing as God sees. God looks into the heart. May we see each other with the eyes of God.