

Sunday March 22, 2020 – Forth Sunday of Lent Homily

By: Fr. Paul Magyar

The overall theme for this week in the readings is about Sight and Seeing.

In the first reading from Exodus 13:21-22 we read that the Israelites were lead by God during the day in the direction of the cloud and lead by night in the direction of the pillar of fire. When the Israelites left the Egyptian kingdom they were lead by God toward the Red Sea avoiding the Philistine country in order to avoid getting into a war with them. Moses the entire time was carrying the bones of Joseph the son of Jacob with him.

The pillar of fire that is seen at night is mount Horeb/Sinai and the cloud seen during the day is the smoke from mount Horeb. This is because mount Horeb is a volcano. This is why when Moses speaks to God the first time by the foot of mount Horeb he speaks to Him through the burning bush. God mediating Himself through the element of fire, the visible light, the light of the world, the beacon of light that leads the Israelites to safety, to freedom. Christ is the light of the world and its one of the reasons why we light a candle during baptism, it is the beacon of light that we follow within the darkness of the world. We are never lost as long as we focus on Christ.

In John 9:1-41 Jesus encounters the man blind from birth. Jesus went out of the temple to avoid being stoned by his enemies and notices this blind man. The definite belief in the transmigration of souls was common among Jews at the time of Jesus' ministry. It was believed that the sins of one's ancestors and parents will lead for example a child to be born blind as a punishment for those sins. The people always blamed themselves for their own punishments. Jesus answers that there is no such connection between suffering and sin. The theological teaching is that there is a chain connecting the sin of humanity and its woe, but the links are not traceable by the human eye.

Jesus the light of the world removes from the man spiritual and physical darkness. Jesus takes natural daily substances, spit and ground in order to make mud/clay to restore the man's sight. It was also a common Greco Roman method to put saliva on the eyes of the blind. Jesus using mud traces back to the first Creation. God using mud/earth/dust to create Adam and Eve, here Jesus uses the same element to restore the chief human sense, sight. Human beings are sight oriented, while most animals are smell oriented. We stand upright, see further and see in detailed colour. Biblically to see is to understand, to have sight is to have wisdom. Jesus the great physician restores his sight so that he can see the look of compassion on the faces of the people.

Praying for all of you

Fr. Paul Magyar