

Dear Parish Family,

As I write this letter to you, our nation and our world are navigating through uncharted waters. The Coronavirus has led to unprecedented measures for both our society and, by extension, the Church. While Masses and all liturgies have been suspended through at least Easter, we also know that God is with us. God is always faithful to us and his love for us is unconditional.

In the weeks to come, I will be sharing weekly reflections on the Sunday scriptures as I often do in my Pastor's Letter for the bulletin. This Sunday is the Fourth Sunday of Lent and the Gospel reading comes to us from John 9:1-41. It is the account of Our Blessed Lord healing the "man blind from birth." Jesus "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." The man did so "and came back able to see."

I had the opportunity to attend a scripture conference in San Diego back in January. One of the speakers was Dr. John Bergsma, who is a Full Professor of Theology at the Franciscan University of Steubenville, in Steubenville, Ohio. In one of his talks, he spoke about how the Pool of Siloam catches water from a gushing spring called the "Gihon." This provided fresh water for Jerusalem, while the Pool of Siloam was at the base of Mt. Zion. The significance of the name of the spring is that it was named after one of the rivers of Eden (cf. Genesis 2:13). Dr. Bergsma went on to state the significance of Jesus spitting on the ground and making clay. It is that just as "the Lord God formed man out of the clay of the ground (Genesis 2:7)," so too in Christ through baptism we "become a new creature, and adopted son of God, who has become a 'partaker of the divine nature' (cf. 2 Cor. 5:17), member of Christ and co-heir with him, and a temple of the Holy Spirit (Catechism of the Catholic Church #1265)."

Indeed, Dr. Bergsma went on to say that all these aspects from John 9:1-41 point to the fact that the Sacraments are grounded in the words and deeds of Jesus and that the Sacraments come forth from the Body of Christ, the Church. As the man is healed of his blindness, he is enlightened and states, "I do believe Lord" and he worshipped him (Jesus).

While these days may not seem to appear or feel so bright, let's never forget that Christ is the light of the world and that we are called to allow his light to shine brightly in our lives. So many people are giving of themselves so generously during this trying time. All of us can pray with trust in the goodness and mercy of God, who makes all things new.

May God bless you and your loved ones.

Fr. Dan Redmond