

# Spiritual Exercises for the 4th Sunday of Lent

As Jesus passed by he saw a man blind from birth. His disciples asked him,

“Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?”

Jesus answered,

“Neither he nor his parents sinned; it is so that the works of God might be made visible through him.

We have to do the works of the one who sent me while it is day.

Night is coming when no one can work.

While I am in the world, I am the light of the world.”

When he had said this, 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.”

So they said to him, “How were your eyes opened?”

He replied,

“The man called Jesus made clay and anointed my eyes

*In this week’s reflection, I asked you to reflect upon toxic people. Remember God allows evil for a greater good. Imagine how God might be allowing those toxic people in your life for a greater good. What might it be?*

*Sometimes our good works cause confusion around us even though it is God’s will. Has this happen to you recently? Have some of your good works caused confusion? Have a conversation with Jesus about this.*

and told me, 'Go to Siloam and wash.'

So I went there and washed and was able to see."

And they said to him, "Where is he?"

He said, "I don't know."

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."

Now the Jews did not believe

that he had been blind and gained his sight

until they summoned the parents of the one who had gained his sight.

They asked them,

"Is this your son, who you say was born blind?"

*Imagine people in your life who are toxic like the Pharisees. Do they similar things to undermine the good works you do? Do they twist your words? Imagine some of the things they might say.*

*Do you have anyone around you who does not believe your testimony? How does that make you feel? Talk with Jesus about the frustration that this can cause.*

How does he now see?"

His parents answered and said,

"We know that this is our son and that he was born blind.

We do not know how he sees now,  
nor do we know who opened his eyes.

Ask him, he is of age;  
he can speak for himself."

His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews,  
for the Jews had already agreed  
that if anyone acknowledged him as the Christ,  
he would be expelled from the synagogue.

For this reason his parents said,  
"He is of age; question him."

So a second time they called the man who had been blind  
and said to him, "Give God the praise!

We know that this man is a sinner."

He replied,

"If he is a sinner, I do not know.

One thing I do know is that I was blind and now I see."

So they said to him,

"What did he do to you?

How did he open your eyes?"

He answered them,

"I told you already and you did not listen.

Why do you want to hear it again?

Do you want to become his disciples, too?"

They ridiculed him and said,

“You are that man’s disciple;  
we are disciples of Moses!  
We know that God spoke to Moses,  
but we do not know where this one is from.”  
The man answered and said to them,  
“This is what is so amazing,  
that you do not know where he is from, yet he opened my eyes.  
We know that God does not listen to sinners,  
but if one is devout and does his will, he listens to him.  
It is unheard of that anyone ever opened the eyes of a person born blind.  
If this man were not from God,  
he would not be able to do anything.”  
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,  
the one speaking with you is he.”  
He said,  
“I do believe, Lord,” and he worshiped him.  
Then Jesus said,  
“I came into this world for judgment,

so that those who do not see might see,  
and those who do see might become blind.”

Some of the Pharisees who were with him heard this  
and said to him, “Surely we are not also blind, are we?”

Jesus said to them,

“If you were blind, you would have no sin;

but now you are saying, ‘We see,’ so your sin remains.

### **Having read this passage, try a few different exercises.**

- 1) Put yourself in the position of one of the people in this account. Try to connect with their emotions.
- 2) Take a word or a phrase and chew on it. Think about it and ponder it... then connect it with your life.
- 3) Then, start to imagine the toxic people in your life. What are the kinds of things that they do which undermine you? Brainstorm some strategies to work against their negativity, maintain your calm and peace, and to connect with the love of Jesus Christ.
- 4) Feel free to write your exercises and to write a conversation with Jesus using the sheet provided.

Jesus \_\_\_\_\_

Me \_\_\_\_\_

Jesus \_\_\_\_\_

Me \_\_\_\_\_

Jesus \_\_\_\_\_

Me \_\_\_\_\_

Jesus \_\_\_\_\_

Me \_\_\_\_\_