

4th Sunday of Lent (A)
March 18, 2007
By Father Charles Bowes

1 Samuel 16:1, 6-7, 10-13
Ephesians 5:8-14
Psalm 23:1-6
John 9:1-4

Ultimately, only God enables us to

In Shakespeare's *King Lear*, two old men, fallen from power, are blinded.

Lear loses sight of reality when he is driven mad by the heartless deception worked against him by two of his daughters. His friend, the Earl of Gloucester, has his eyes gouged out by a hit man commissioned by the Earl's own son. Gradually, both characters journey from blindness to insight. The Earl reveals his inner progress when an onlooker remarks, "You cannot see your way." The blind man responds, "I have no way and therefore want no eyes; I stumbled when I saw." Both Lear and Gloucester had to be plunged into outer darkness before they could learn to see the light.

"I am the light of the world," Jesus tells his disciples today in John Chapter 9. Then, as though proving a point, he immediately heals the man born blind. But what happens? Does everyone shout "Hallelujah" and clap the ecstatic newly sighted one on the back? Do they hoist Jesus upon their shoulders and carry him around like a hero who has vanquished the power of darkness? Not on your life. They willfully remain in the dark. They are confident that they alone can guide others to walk in God's ways. Like Gloucester, "they stumbled when they saw."

If Saint Paul had been around, he might have quoted Isaiah to the Pharisees as he does to us today in Chapter 5 of his letter to the Ephesians:

"Awake, O sleeper, arise from the dead, and Christ will give you light." In other words, "No sleepwalking your way through Lent!" Each day, move closer to the Light by becoming more faithful to prayer, to fasting of some kind, to the works of justice and peace. Move closer to the Light by making use of our communal reconciliation service for our three-parish cluster, a week from this coming Tuesday at 7:00 p.m. here at Our Lady of the Rosary. Name and claim our stumbling efforts to see. Even our failures in penance are a source of blessing, since they remind us of our need for God.

*Ultimately, only God enables us
to see clearly.*

THE HOMILY FOR TODAY'S MASS

Reflections

July 14 & 15th
15th Sunday in Ordinary Time

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