

*Lord, heal our spiritual blindness*



The Church presents to us throughout the year the wonderful story of Christ, from His humble Birth to His glorious Ascension into Heaven. We must proclaim with the Blind Man of the Gospel: "Lord, I believe," and then fall down and worship Him.

# Saint Paul the Apostle Orthodox Church

24 BURKE ROAD

FREEHOLD, NJ 07728

Sunday of the Blindman

May 17, 2015

Father Robert E Lucas, Pastor;  
Subdeacon Daniel J. Korba and Nikitas Tsokris,  
Cantors

Rectory 215-862-9227; Parish Center 732-780-3158

## We Are A Stewardship Parish Of Time, Talent and Treasure

The mission of our parish faith community is to teach the Gospel message in the rich tradition of the Orthodox Church; to enable people to reflect the image of Jesus Christ in every day activities of life; to offer spiritual formation through changing times; and to celebrate community among Orthodox believers in our Freehold area.

We of St. Paul the Apostle Parish dedicate ourselves to maintaining the sanctity of worship and spiritual enlightenment in a family environment that reaches and involves all ages and unifies all people.

We believe in the spirit of ecumenism in which we share our faith by word and example and extend our spiritual insights to all people.

We accept the responsibility of Christian Stewardship that through generous giving we may all experience a faith communion with Christ as the Center of our lives.

We dedicate ourselves to insuring the well-being of all people so that we may truly experience the message of Christ's salutary gospel.

We are a beacon on a hill with the eyes of many upon us; that beacon is the inspired Light of Christ which must shine brightly in our lives.

*It is not ourselves we preach but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who said, 'Let light shine out of darkness,' has shone in our hearts, that we in turn might make known the glory of God shining on the face of Christ. This treasure we possess in earthen vessels to make it clear that its surpassing power comes from God and not from us. We are afflicted in every way possible, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in us. 2 Corinthians 4: 5 - 8.*

## GLAD TIDINGS

+++ This Thursday is the solemn feast of the Ascension of our Lord. In anticipation, the vesperal Divine Liturgy will be celebrated Wednesday evening at 7: 30 PM. Please join us in prayer and praise!

+++ We remind our faithful diocesan and parish dues are DUE. Only fourteen diocesan dues are received. Please fulfill this privileged obligation as soon as possible otherwise the parish must make it up.



+++ Today at 9: 15 AM, we celebrate a Memorial Service requested by Anna Zacharyczuk for the repose of the souls of her beloved parents, +Michael & Katherine Chmielnicki. We pray the merciful Lord comforts Anna and loved ones in their loss and grants to the souls of the departed a blessed repose and creates for them Eternal Memory, Christ Is Risen!

+++ Every Monday, we have prayerful devotions before the Myrrh bearing icon at 6:00 PM. Everyone is invited to be present in praise. The Birthgiver invites us to manifest our faith in response to her first shown love, to unite our prayers with hers for the salvation of our souls. Invite your friends and neighbors to join us.

+++ Please keep the intentions of these members of our parish intercession community in your daily prayers: Father George, Barbara, Betty, James, Yevlogia, Nicholas, Maria, Cynthia, Pani Anna Marie, Father Myron, Pani Delores and Andrea.

+++ The sign-up sheet for both the Web Site and Bulletin sponsors is on the bulletin board in the kitchen. Please sign up as soon as possible. Do NOT make payment until your sign-up month has arrived. This will make it easier for Father to keep track of payments. Thanks in advance to all who support the parish in this way.

+++ We offer thanks to the Blessed Trinity for inspiring generosity in the souls of our faithful and the blessing of abundant grace in our midst with the offering received last Sunday: Tithe Offering, \$373.00; Candles, \$33.00; Food Coupons, \$220.00; Kitchen, \$288.00 for a total of \$914.00. We express our profound gratitude to the parishioner communicants who offer their God-given treasure and labored for the sake of the Lord and the good of our parish. God bless and reward you good and faithful souls!

+++ As faithful believers, we intercede and associate ourselves in prayer with the following who have prayed and offered seven day lights for their intentions: Father Lucas, Maria Idronmenos, Anna Zacharyczuk, Bob Gorbich, Marilyn Korba and Pani Buletza.

+++ We make a **PENNIES FROM HEAVEN** Canister available for our faithful to bring in pennies for our altar and its appointments. We are already in receipt of **\$1828.00** from this apostolate. Even your pennies can help and are a blessing to our parish.

+++ Please be certain to see a member of the Parish Council if you would like to help our parish by using **Shop Rite Food Coupons** available in \$20.00 denominations. We invite **ALL** to be caring and supportive and use Grocery Coupons for food shopping as we have gratefully realized \$5750 on this project to date!

+++ The **Clothing Drive** is a permanent on-going project in our parish. Please bring any type of clothing and fabrics along with stuffed animals and shoes for the benefit of our parish. The bags can be left in the vestibule or on the front porch of the rectory. Please invite your friends and neighbors to assist us in disposing of unwanted clothing, shoes and fabrics.

+++ We invite all pray the Lord our God grants us the grace of enrichment of our spiritual lives for his glory.



### He is Risen

*is risen indeed and has appeared to Simon* Luke 24: 34.

*After that he was seen by five hundred brothers at once, most of whom are still alive, although some have fallen asleep* 1 Corinthians 15: 6.

*He first appeared to Mary Magdalene* Mark 16: 9.

*The women came up and embraced his feet and did him homage* Matthew 28: 9.

*Later on, as two of them were walking along on the way to the country, he was revealed to them completely changed in appearance* Mark 16: 12, 13.

*They then recounted what had happened on the road and how they had come to know him in the breaking of bread* Luke 24: 35.

*The Lord has been raised! It is true! He also appeared to Simon* Luke 24: 34.

*Jesus came and stood before them* John 20: 19.

*A week later, the disciples were once more in the upper room and this time, Thomas was with them...Jesus came and stood before them* John 20: 26.

*This marked the third time Jesus appeared to the disciples after being raised from the dead* John 21: 14.

# The Blind Man

Jesus is on His way to Jerusalem and to His death. He was close to his execution, but no one seems to care. The noisy crowd around him argues who would be first in the kingdom or speculated about the true meaning of His prophecy about His death. It was then that the blind man Bartimeus cried out for salvation (Mark 10: 46 – 52).

## Internal Blindness

The Lord called to Bartimeus. Bartimeus listened and responded. He was physically blind, but he knew more about reality than the Lord's disciples did. He knew who he was, and he knew that he needed healing. Bartimeus knew that his Lord lived and would help him if only he asked. It was faith that he must exhibit. When the Lord spoke, Bartimeus heard and ran to his God. Though blind, his darkness was not as deep as that which enveloped the disciples. They saw the Lord but could not understand what He was saying.

## The Question

Jesus asked the same question of Bartimeus as He asked of James and John on the previous day: "What do you want me to do for you?" Mark 10: 51. Bartimeus gave the better answer: "I want to see." The disciples responded by asking to be given thrones (Mark 10: 37). Bartimeus asks only to be made whole, to be healed.

## The Blind See

Jesus cured Bartimeus because of his faith and then continued on His way to Jerusalem. It was a strange event. Jesus was marching to His death and only God and a blind man could see.

## Would You See?

Open the eyes of your soul to see the freely offered salvation of Christ and make it your own by repenting of your sins. See your eternal destiny secure for you in Christ. So live that you achieve it!



## THE ABC'S OF FRIENDSHIP

Always be honest.  
Be there when they need you.  
Cheer them on.  
Don't look for their faults.  
Every chance you get, call!  
Forgive them.  
Get together often.  
Have faith in them.  
Include them.  
Just listen.  
Know their dreams.  
Love them unconditionally.  
Make them feel special.  
Never forget them.  
Offer to help.  
Praise them honestly.  
Quietly disagree.  
Rescue them often.  
Say you're sorry.  
Talk frequently.  
Use good judgment.  
Vote for them!  
Wish them good luck!  
X-ray yourself first.  
Your word counts.  
Zip your mouth when told a secret.

# A RE WE BLIND ?



Recently a television evangelist began talking about "the blindness of this age" and he was right on target. There are as many examples of blindness that hamper our personal growth as there are people. However, the major issue blinding humanity, especially in our own country is the one that blinded those who could not confess, "Jesus is Lord," after He cured the man born blind. The issue is self-reliance.

We have been plagued with the belief that we can rely solely on ourselves ever since Adam and Eve lost paradise. However, especially since the Industrial Revolution some 150 years ago, men and women have become increasingly convinced of the

control and direction they think they possess over their own lives.

This control and the accompanying illusion of self-reliance is partly the result of modern technologies. For example, medical technology has helped millions to overcome life-threatening diseases. Computers have miniaturized our world and placed powerful time-savers at our fingertips. Robots have replaced people in the most hazardous jobs in many industries. All in all, it would seem that contemporary people ought to be best fed, best educated, best housed, and most content ever. Yet, this often is not the case at all.

Often the very technologies that are supposed to serve us have helped enslave us. The overuse of modern antibiotics has produced strains of "super bacteria" that do not respond to medicine, further endangering our species even more seriously. Modern industry produces waste products that are hazardous to us and our environment. Computers have enabled businesses to reduce work forces, eliminating job security for many.

Two factors lead our illusion of self-reliance. The first is material prosperity, which has conditioned many to take for granted what our grandparents considered luxuries. Sometimes the reasons both mother and father are working outside the home is to pay for each family member's personal desires in sports, recreational opportunities, vacations, fashions, video games, etc.

The second factor is a dramatic shift from personal ethics based on God's Law to the exaltation of individual choice and personal misunderstood freedom. This has led many in our society to believe that technology, money, and individual initiative will make their lives ultimately meaningful, fulfilling and happy.

Many are sadly rediscovering the spiritual bankruptcy of self-reliance. Unfortunately, some are turning to fundamentalist religions and philosophies that promise hope, but only deliver more self-reliance. This new age philosophy is simply a new way of practicing Gnosticism – that attitude of the spirit which, in the name of a profound knowledge of God, results in distorting His word, replacing it with purely human words, understandings and insights, always misguided and incorrect.

Until man recognizes his true dignity is alignment and association with Christ the Saviour, he will

continue to suffer in self-imposed spiritual blindness and limitation. He will not achieve his real potential through God-bestowed grace.

Man most often makes choices by himself which are detrimental to his eternal destiny. He misinterprets freedom bestowed by Christ as a freedom to sin, to disbelieve, to be alienated from the very Source of his power and inner strength. He actually thinks separation from God has no negative effects on his life. Thus he functions merely as flesh without redemption and dignity and does not see the potential which extends beyond the temporal into eternity. Thus, by himself, man dooms himself to privation and obscurity, but when allied with the Lord, there is no limit to the spiritual accomplishments he can achieve.

Jesus Christ, the Truth that sets us free from sin and death wishes to heal the blindness of this age and of every age. In Jesus' death and Resurrection, God reveals His saving love and offers it to all through faith. The "blind" will see, but only if they turn to the Light of the world.





## Life Is A...

*Mystery – unfold it.*

*Struggle – face it.*

*Beauty – enjoy it.*

*Puzzle – solve it.*

*Opportunity – take it.*

*Sorrowful – experience it.*

*Song – sing it.*

*Way to a goal – achieve it.*

*Mission – fulfill it.*

## The Hammer

Consider the hammer, a simple, but necessary tool. It keeps its head. It does not fly off the handle. It keeps pounding away. It finds the point, then drives it home, and sometimes has to extract a mistake accidentally or purposely made. It looks at the other side, too, and thus clinches the matter. It makes mistakes, but when it does, it starts all over.

## The Story Behind The Story

Alfred Nobel started the legacy of the Nobel Prizes because of a profoundly mature response to his own mistaken obituary. A French journalist had confused his brother Ludvig's death for that of

Alfred. In his column he called Alfred "the merchant of death" because his company manufactured and sold dynamite. He was also known as a cruel employer and a ruthless man.

In the book, *Alfred Nobel, the Loneliest Millionaire*, Michael Evlanoff and Marjorie Flour wrote that after Alfred read and reread the obituary, he wondered whether he deserved any other recognition than "merchant of death." Had he done anything on earth except be partly responsible for its destruction and the suffering of many?

His response, of course, could have been to make sure that the reporter was fired and that the newspaper suffered retribution. His response could also have been that he was deeply misunderstood by the masses. He had enormous wealth and power, so he could have blamed others for their faulty perceptions.

Instead, in a profoundly mature and visionary redirection, he established the Nobel prize for Peace, Literature, Physiology and Medicine, Physics, and Chemistry. When he died in 1896, his obituary accurately described him as a humanitarian and a visionary.

There is a similar story behind the story of every person. We can change and it is never too late to conclude our life story with astounding effects if we give expression to the faith of Christ in our heart and soul.

## **WISDOM! BE ATTENTIVE!**

All you people, clap your hands; shout to God with cries of gladness. Through the prayers of the Mother of God, O Saviour, save us! First Antiphon, Feast of the Ascension of our Lord.

God ascends His throne amid shouts of joy, the Lord amid the sound of trumpets. Entrance hymn, Feast of the Ascension of our Lord.

You ascended in glory, O Christ our God, and You delighted the disciples with the promise of the Holy Spirit. Through this blessing, they were assured that You are the Son of God, the Redeemer of the world. Troparion, Feast of the Ascension of our Lord.

When You fulfilled the plan of salvation for us and united all things on earth to those in heaven, O Christ our God, You ascended in glory, never leaving us, but remaining ever present. For You proclaim to those who love You: "I am with you, and no one else has power over you." Kontakion, Feast of the Ascension of our Lord.

Be exalted above the heavens, O God, and let Your glory be over all the earth. Prokimenon, Feast of the Ascension of our Lord.

O my soul, extol the Lord Who in glory ascended bodily into heaven. O you who are the Mother of God in manner beyond understanding and beyond words, who gave birth in time to the Lord Whom time cannot contain; we the faithful magnify you with one accord. Hymn instead of 'It is truly Proper,' Feast of the Ascension of our Lord.

God ascended His throne amid shouts of joy, the Lord amid the sound of trumpets. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia. Communion Hymn, Feast of the Ascension of our Lord.

When You came to the Mount of Olives, O Christ, completing the favorable plan of Your Father, the angels in heaven were moved with wonder, and the demons trembled beneath the earth. The apostles were filled with both fear and joy when You were speaking with them. A cloud was prepared before You as an awaiting throne; heaven opened its gates, shining with beauty; and the earth uncovered its deep abyss to show the fall of Adam and his rising up to You again. As an unseen power raised You from the earth, You gave Your blessing in a loud voice; the cloud carried You away, and heaven opened to receive You. Such is the great work that is beyond words, O Lord, that You accomplished for the salvation of our souls. Vesper Hymn, Ascension of our Lord.

# Did You Know That ...

- ...more important than the quest for certainty is the quest for clarity?
- ...we are all prime number divisible only by ourselves?
- ...faith is not a pill you take, but a muscle always used?
- ...you and God are the only ones who have custody of your life?
- ...your choices are half chance; yours and somebody else's?
- ...your mistakes are your unique way of getting to where you need to be?
- ...you should not waste too much of the time you have left; make some body notice your faith in Christ?
- ...the first rule for success in saving our soul is to show up for worship every Sunday and holyday?
- ...an intellectual snob is someone who can listen to the William Tell Overture and not think of The Lone Ranger?
- ...even if you fall on your face, you are still moving forward?
- ...we many times get the most of what we need the least?
- ...all it takes to make a good idea generate steam is for a person to get all fired up over it?
- ...many people who imagine they are live wires are only shocking?
- ...humility is the mother of giants; one sees great things from the valley, only small things from the peak?
- ...priests recognize by serving the Lord that His opinion is far better than theirs?



## *the Bible: must Reading*

*You Orthodox Christians do not know Scripture because your Church has discouraged Bible reading. if you read the Bible, you would become Protestants!*

That view is wrong, of course, but we must refute it, first of all by actually reading and knowing the Bible as the historic councils of the Church so strongly encouraged. But because our people are so profoundly ignorant of the faith of Christ, they do not even know this, and perhaps, because of the way they relate to their priests, they would no doubt ignore their admonition to be actually aware, even literate of Biblical teaching. It is our book, the Book of the Orthodox Church, after all!

Our encouragement is designed as a practical aid for Orthodox believers. Bible reading is our idea; Bible Study is our heritage. Bible reading belongs to our patrimony and our spiritual inheritance if we were not such avid followers of American Protestant secular worldliness and so proud of our own understanding because we do not very much like the teaching authority of the Body of Christ.

This, next to prayer and celebration of the Divine Liturgy is our most important religious activity. It is high time for each of us to set aside at least fifteen to twenty minutes a day for God in his specific revelation to us. Both prayer and Bible reading definitely involve listening to him, indeed, the two should blend into one another. Is this also the reason so many Orthodox believers avoid church on Sundays and holydays and enjoy their own company apart from him, so much?

We will begin by speaking of *Ecclesiastes* because the rest of Scripture is an answer to the proverbial question posed by that book. Is life a "vanity of vanities" or does it have purpose? The "wisdom literature" of the Old Testament, especially, *Ecclesiastes*, asks that basic question, the very question that haunts man more today than in any previous era.

So we begin with the basic question. The physician addresses himself to the patient. What is the Bible? The word means "book." However, it is not one book, but a library or collection of books, many different book by so many different authors, times and literary

forms: history, poetry, drama, philosophy, law and much, much more! It is a library of books with repeated messages in varied forms.

Yet, there is unity in its diversity. Basically the Bible is about real events which happened in history. And above all it is a love story because "God is love." This is his purpose in all He does. The Bible is God's love story with his people.

The story unfolds in three acts. Theologians call them Creation, Fall and Redemption. They fit the stages of every story ever told. First, a situation is set up; then it is somehow upset by a problem or conflict; finally it is resolved successfully or unsuccessfully. Paradise, Paradise Lost and Paradise Regained are the stages here and the third and last stage begins as early as the third chapter of Genesis, when our heavenly Father begins to redeem, or buy back lost and fallen mankind.

The third act has three sub-scenes. First, our God reveals himself as Father in the Old Testament; then as Jesus, the Son in the gospels; finally as the Holy Spirit in *Acts of the Apostles* and all of the time that follows, the actual age of Christ's Church on earth. This is the part of the story we are in.

The books of the Bible in both testaments are divided into three main categories: history, wisdom, and prophecy. Thus the Bible encompasses past (history), present (wisdom) and future (prophecy).

But its history books are more than records of the past; they tell us truths that are just as true of the present. And its wisdom books tell truths that are timeless. Finally, its prophets do not merely foretell the future but preach God's truth to all times. The Bible is God's continual prophet telling women and men of every time and -place, therefore of our time the truths we need to know for our lives on earth and the way to joy in eternity, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through me" John 14: 6.

The basic choice every reader must make about the Bible is whether or not to believe its claim to be divinely inspired. Is this God's Word about man or is it man's word about God? It claims to be the first of those two things; if it is not, it cannot give us what it claims to give, four things we most need: four values God alone is possessed of.

First, the Bible claims to be a witness of imparting and sharing truth - the kind that is "...tried and true" Psalms 12: 7; that "...stands true" Isaiah 40: 8; that is "...made true" or performed Ezekiel 12: 25; "...that comes true," as the fulfillment of a promise, "Do not think that I have come to abolish the law and the prophets. I have come not to abolish the law, but to fulfill them. Of this much I assure you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter of



the law, not the smallest part of a letter, shall be done away with until it all comes true”  
Matthew 5: 17, 18.

It claims to have power. It uses images like “...fire” and a “...hammer” Jeremiah 23: 29 to refer to itself. It calls itself the “...sword of the spirit.” Ephesians 6: 17.

Third, it imparts life. Its words “...bring God’s life-giving Spirit” John 6: 63. Jesus also calls it “...seed” Luke 8, which is a life-growing element. St Paul says, “...the word of God is alive and active, sharper than any double-edged sword; it cuts all the way through to where soul and spirit meet...It judges the desires and thoughts of man’s heart” Hebrews 4: 12. Physical swords only cut bodies; his cuts souls, opens souls, exposes souls, heals souls. For this sword comes alive in the use of a divine swordsman, the Holy Spirit. When you read it, beware: it is reading you. It is not safe and passive. Look out! It is alive!

Fourth, the Bible gives joy, for this is the very substance of God. The Psalms are full of expressions of joy in God’s Word. “Happy the man...who delights in he law of the Lord and meditates on his law day and night” Psalms 1: 2; “The law of the Lord is perfect, refreshing the soul; the decree of the Lord is trustworthy, giving wisdom to the simple. The precepts of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commands of the Lord is clear, enlightening the eye; Fear of the Lord is sure, enduring forever; the ordinances of the Lord are true, all of them just; they are more precious than gold, than a heap of the purest gold, sweeter also than syrup or honey from the comb” Psalms 19: 8 - 11; “How I love your Law, O Lord! It is my meditation all day!” Psalms 119: 97. The prophet Jeremiah says to God, “Your words filled my heart with joy” Jeremiah 15: 16. This is not just a book, this is a love letter, written by God Almighty to each of us, the individual person He desires to become a vital part of the community of faith. He says to each one of us, “I have called you by name; you are mine” Isaiah 43: 1. The words, “I love you” are magic words; they change us when we hear them spoken to us. How much more so when we actually hear them from our Creator God!

If you permit this Book to speak to you, you will find it shows you to God and yourself. Just as Jesus revealed each person He met not only himself, but also themselves in a new way, so this book reveals both God and ourselves. It is a revealing mirror!

Here are some specific suggestions on reading Scripture:

Forget commentaries that tell you what the Bible means, read the Bible itself. Get it “straight from the horse’s mouth.” The Bible is the most interesting and engaging book ever written, but some of the books about it are the dullest.



Read repeatedly. You can never exhaust the riches of this book. The greatest theologians and saints never exhausted it; neither will you. Read once, quickly, to get an over all idea of the book or chapter. Then go back and read more carefully. Do not rush. Relish, ponder, meditate, think, question, sink slowly into the verses that invite you to swim in them. Try to read without prejudice. Let the author speak to you. Do not impose your own ideas. Listen carefully first before you talk back.

Once you have listened, talk back. Dialogue with the author as if he were living and standing in front of you. Ask him questions and then go to his book to see what he answers. Ask our heavenly Father questions. He is a good teacher; He loves his students to ask questions.

Do not confuse understanding with evaluation. That is, do not confuse interpreting with criticizing; first understand, then evaluate. First permit the book to talk to you, then talk back. This sounds simple, but is harder than you may think. For example, many people interpret the Bible's miracle stories as myths because they do not believe in miracles. That is simply bad interpretation. Whether the miracles really happened or not, the first question is: What is the author trying to say? Is he telling a parable, fable, or a myth? Or is he telling a story he claims really happened?

The second question is whether you agree with him. But do not permit the second question to come first. Do not say, for example, "I do not agree that Jesus really rose from the dead, therefore I interpret the Resurrection is a myth." The writers did not mean to write myth, but fact. If it did not happen, it is not a myth, but a lie. Keep; in mind three questions and ask them in his order: First, what does the passage mean? Do I believe it? Third, so what? What difference does it make to my life? What should I do about it? How should I respond ?

Look for the "big picture," the main point. Do not lose the forest for the trees. Do not get hung up on a few specific passages in its context.

Be honest in reading this or any other book, but especially the Bible, because of its great claims on you. There is only one honest reason for believing the Bible because it is true. Not because it is comforting, or challenging, or up to date, or useful or relevant. If it were all of these things, but not true, it should not be believed. Seek the truth; "seek...and you shall find" Matthew 7: 7. This is a promise from our Creator God, our heavenly Father in the life of his Body, our beloved Church.



**O**n this "SUNDAY OF THE BLINDMAN," we find that there are at least 3 ways in which to see . . .

1. There is **PHYSICAL SIGHT**, which is normally what we have in mind when thinking about sight. With our eyes we see the sky, the church, the altar, our children . . . Certainly sight is a remarkable gift we have from our Creator.

2. There is **MENTAL SIGHT**. A teacher is at a blackboard, explaining a problem in mathematics. She writes the problem out, she explains it carefully, a student understands it and exclaims: "Now I see!" What he meant was that he understood. He now had mental sight.

3. There is **SPIRITUAL SIGHT**, the vision of the heart. We do know that Jesus looked at people and had compassion on them. He saw not only with His eyes and mind, but with His heart and spirit. A person in love looks at the object of his devotion not only with his eyes, but with his spirit.

We know that sight can be impaired. That is why so many people wear eyeglasses. And there certainly are blind people in the world. Other people have difficulty in understanding and "seeing" situations. This is called spiritual blindness. Those who condemned the Blind Man, who "excommunicated" him from their religious group, and condemned the One who healed him . . . they were blind to the glory and uniqueness of Christ.

Let us be mindful of the wonderful gifts of sight we have. Let us guard our physical sight, our mental sight and above all, our spiritual eyes. Our faith is the greatest treasure we possess, and it would be the greatest tragedy to lose.