

# The Lewis County Catholic Times

*A Weekly Bulletin for the parishes of Saint Patrick Catholic Church, Weston,  
Saint Boniface Catholic Church, Camden and Good Shepherd Mission, Glenville, West Virginia  
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## The Fourth Sunday of Lent

"Rejoice, Jerusalem! Be glad for her, you who love her; rejoice with her, you who mourned for her, and you will find contentment at her consoling breasts." This Sunday is known as Laetare Sunday and is a Sunday of joy. Lent is half over, and Easter is enticingly near.

The Church's liturgy, on this the fourth Sunday of Lent, invites us to retrace one of the fundamental dynamics of our baptismal re-birth through the Gospel account of the healing of the 'man born blind'. It is the passage from the darkness of sin and error to the Light of God, who is the Risen Christ.

This Sunday is called "Laetare Sunday" since its mood and theme was one of hope and rejoicing that Easter was near. In the reformed calendar this Sunday is not different from the other Sundays of Lent even though the entrance antiphon for the day still begins with the Latin word laetare (rejoice) and the vestments worn by the celebrant can be rose-colored. The day is important because it is the day of the Second Scrutiny in preparation for the baptism of adults at the Easter Vigil.

The Gospel reading, John 9:1-41, dominates the liturgy by the length of the reading and its significance. Already, in Old Testament Revelation, the Lord God had shown the People of Israel how the justice of the Creator was so much more profound and true than the thoughts of men. We have, in fact, heard in the first reading 'God does not see as human beings see; they look at appearances but the Lord looks at the heart.' (1 Sam 16:7). The Lord pointed out in this way the true, unique, criteria on which men are judged. He also indicated the unique place in which man can meet God's gaze and enter into a relationship with Him—in his heart. Obviously, by the word 'heart' the Bible doesn't mean the center of pulsation, but man's 'shrine', his conscience where he can really listen and recognize God's voice and so benefit from the Light: 'for the effects of the light are seen in complete goodness and uprightness and truth'. (Eph 5:9)

Man, incapable of remaining faithful to the truth that is in him, falls back to his own limited criteria. This criteria produces every malice, injustice and falsehood and is used to govern himself, to decide between good and evil, whilst hoping that what he obtains will be to his benefit and so in this way he acts 'like God' (Gen 3:5).

God doesn't give up but comes to meet everyone of us in the two fold way described in today's Gospel. Firstly, 'he spat on the ground and made clay with the saliva, and smeared the clay on his eyes' (Jn 9:6). God made man, who is a creature. He united Himself to 'our earth'

so that man would never need to flee Him, but could come to recognize Him through a meeting with His Holy Humanity. St John wrote in the Prologue to his Gospel, 'The Word became flesh, he lived among us' (Jn 1:14).

In the second place from the Gospel account we read, 'He said to him, "Go wash in the Pool of Siloam"—which means Sent—'. (Jn 9:7a). Christ, sent by the Father, takes onto Himself all our sins, which are ultimately the consequences of our blindness, as far as allowing Himself to be stripped, crowned with thorns, nailed to the cross, rejected by His own people and abandoned by His closest friends. Christ's unprecedented love can't but definitively overcome, with time, every fear in the face of our limitations because there isn't anything that can stop Him from loving us. From the loving assumption of our rejection to our obtuseness murder, the Lord has worked extraordinary feats in history. He frequently offered His Body to the Father for our salvation and therefore has consecrated His entire Person for every one of us. He has introduced us into His Most Holy Heart, inflamed with love for us, which is the same as God's light. In the Light of the Resurrection he made us a 'new creation' (cfr 2 Cor 5:17) and in the Gospel account we have heard 'he went and washed, and came back able to see'. (Jn 9:7)

The indestructible link with Christ, which is founded on His love and fidelity, is the 'new creation' that was given to us on the day of our Baptism. Through the Sacraments of Christian

initiation we are more profoundly linked with Christ. This 'new creation' can not bring forth fruit in us without the full and renewed consent of our liberty that, in this earthly life, is expressed, reinvigorated and triumphs through the extraordinary events that Christ works in our lives. The blind man was interrogated by the world as to the precise details of his cure and with great simplicity he explained what happened to him: 'The man called Jesus made clay and anointed my eyes and told me, 'Go to Siloam and wash.' So I went there and washed and was able to see.'" (Jn 9:11)

Let us ask Most Holy Mary to help us to be faithful to the truth, to the events of our lives, taking the hand that always takes us to live totally for Him, in this life and eternity. 'Wake up, sleeper, rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.' (Eph 5:14).

From the Congregation for the Clergy

O God, who through your Word reconcile the human race to yourself in a wonderful way, grant, we pray, that with prompt devotion and eager faith the Christian people may hasten toward the solemn celebrations to come. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.



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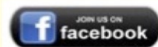
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