

# FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT

Loving someone who struggles with addiction can distort our vision. We may begin with compassion and clarity, but over time fear, exhaustion, and confusion cloud our sight. We second-guess ourselves. We question our boundaries. In the middle of broken promises and shifting moods, it can be hard to tell what is real and what is fueled by panic. Lent invites us to slow down and ask Christ to heal what we are seeing.

In this Sunday's gospel, Jesus restores sight to a man born blind (John 9:1, 6-9):

*As Jesus passed by he saw a man blind from birth. 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."*

The man's blindness was not his fault. Earlier in the passage, Jesus refuses to blame the man or his parents. That matters for us. We did not cause our loved one's addiction, and we are not responsible for curing it. Still, the chaos can train us to live on high alert. We may watch every tone of voice and every change in routine, trying to predict what will happen next. That vigilance can feel like love, but it often becomes a form of control that drains the soul.

Recovery for family and friends begins with a different kind of seeing. We start to notice our own patterns: rescuing, over-explaining, bargaining, or shutting down.

We also learn to recognize what is ours to do and what is not. A boundary is not punishment. It is a clear statement of what we will do to remain faithful to God and healthy in our own lives. Detachment with love means stepping out of God's jurisdiction while staying rooted in compassion.

Saint Paul writes in the second reading (Ephesians 5:8-10):

*You were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light, for light produces every kind of goodness and righteousness and truth. Try to learn what is pleasing to the Lord.*

Light brings truth, and truth brings freedom. Sometimes the truth is that we are tired and need support. Sometimes it is that we have been saying "yes" out of fear. In meetings, we learn that serenity is not something we achieve by controlling outcomes. Serenity grows when we surrender outcomes to God and choose the next right action for ourselves.

Lent gives us practical ways to practice this surrender. Prayer helps us hand God what we keep gripping. Fasting can reveal how deeply control has taken root. Almsgiving reminds us that we are part of a wider Body. The sacraments also steady us. In the Eucharist, Christ feeds us when we are depleted. In Confession, we can bring our fear and resentment into the light and receive mercy.

The healed man faces misunderstanding. People argue about whether he is even the same person. When we begin to recover, others may resist our change too. Staying grounded takes courage. But clarity is a gift. Christ is teaching us to see ourselves as His beloved, not as the manager of someone else's life.

This week, let us ask for restored sight. Not so we can better monitor another person, but so we can walk with integrity, one day at a time, trusting the Shepherd to lead us.

## REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- When have you noticed fear or confusion clouding your vision in loving someone impacted by addiction?  
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- What does detachment with love look like for you in a specific situation right now?  
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- Where is God inviting you to practice surrender so that serenity can take deeper root?  
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## MASS READINGS

**FIRST READING** 1 Samuel 16:1b, 6-7, 10-13a

**RESP. PS.** Psalm 23: 1-3a, 3b-4, 5, 6

**SECOND READING** Ephesians 5:8-14

**GOSPEL** John 9:1-41

