

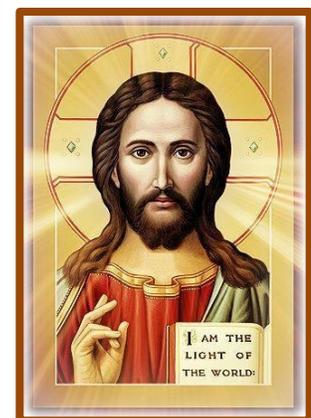
In today's Gospel (John 9:1-41) Jesus declares himself to be "the light of the world." Furthermore, he says, "I came into this world for judgment, so that those who do not see might see, and those who do see might become blind." What does this mean? The answer lies in the drama of the healing of the blind man.

The man born blind was physically healed by Jesus; but more importantly, he became a believer in Christ. As a result of the healing, he perceived in Christ the "light of the world." Jesus asked him directly if he believed. He replied, "I do believe, Lord," and he worshiped him." Oh, what joy and amazement must have filled his soul as he saw the light and worshiped Jesus for the first time! Yes, Jesus came "so that those who do not see might see!"

Jesus' miracle was not received by all in the same way. In fact, it caused a great division among the people – judgment was being rendered. Some of the Pharisees condemned Jesus because he healed the man on the Sabbath day. They threatened to expel from the synagogue anyone who acknowledged Jesus. They refused to believe the testimony of the blind man and expelled him from the synagogue as an ignorant man "born totally in sin." Seeing this we cannot help but ask, "How can they be so blind!" The light of the world was standing right in front of them, but they refused to believe!

What made the difference between the response of the blind man and the response of the Pharisees? The blind man was a humble beggar; the Pharisees were so full of themselves they had no room for "the light of the world"—they considered themselves superior to the blind man and superior to Jesus himself! Jesus said to them, "If you were blind, you would have no sin; but now you are saying, 'We see,' so your sin remains."

During this season of Lent, Jesus – the Light of the world – stands before us and shines the light of his perfect purity, love, humility, truth and goodness on each of us. In his presence, are we willing to acknowledge our faults – our blindness – or do we consider ourselves in no need of enlightenment – no need of repentance and Confession? Will we resist the Light and continue in darkness, or will we allow Jesus to open our eyes so we can say with the joy and amazement of the blind beggar, "I do believe, Lord," and worship him in spirit and in truth?



Your Servant in Christ,
Fr. Terry Staples