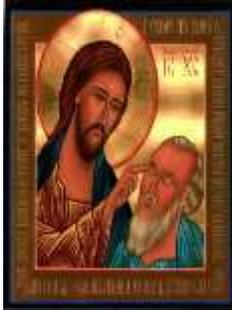


## Stewardship Reflection on Lectionary Readings: March 26, 2017

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1 SM 16: 1B, 6-7-, 10-13A; PS 23: 1-6; EPH 5: 8-14; JN 9: 1-41



Holy Scripture is so rich in text and in the insights and messages we are provided from the Word of God. Today's readings, on this Fourth Sunday of Lent, are prime examples of that fact.

Our First Reading comes from the First Book of Samuel. Samuel, of course, consists of two books. The First, from which today's reading comes, begins with the birth of the prophet Samuel and how God called him as a boy. Our specific reading for today provides a message that not only relates to the other readings, but also is important for us to grasp at this point in Lent. Within today's reading is the statement, "Not as man sees does God see, because man sees the appearance, but God looks into the heart."

How often does Jesus make reference to this perspective? How often does He say that what we do and what we appear to do externally is not as important as what we truly believe on the inside? It is human for us to be influenced by outer appearances, and it is equally human for us to be concerned about what others think of us as well. Thus, we may do things which look good to those around us, but which may not reflect reality. Regardless, we also must understand that the Lord does not just look into our hearts. He knows full well what is there. Part of our Lenten goal should be to change our hearts to love more, and to truly be more holy.

Another perspective of Lent is reflected in the Second Reading from St. Paul's Letter to the Ephesians. This scriptural passage speaks of darkness and light, specifically about the passage from darkness to light. We are called to seek the light always, but especially at this time of year. Darkness can be interpreted as those things that are hidden in our heart (a la the First Reading from Samuel); light is the love and goodness we are to seek and achieve. Paul tells us, "Live as children of light, for light produces every kind of goodness and righteousness and truth." Truth is certainly something we are to search for during Lent.

Truth can have many definitions, but in this instance it clearly means to find what is acceptable to God and then to live that way. In his opening statement Paul makes it clear that striving to be righteous is not enough. We are to reflect the Light of Christ that He offers us, and we are to reflect it in our lives, and especially in our hearts. One approach to this kind of life can be found in living a life of stewardship. That means we do not just realize and accept the Light of Christ but we share it with others. Today's scriptural passage closes with "Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will give you light." Many scholars believe that may have been the chorus from a popular song or poem of Paul's time. It surely captures Lenten themes — awaking from the dead, as in Resurrection; finding the Light of Christ; and realizing that this Light is a gift from God. That is part of what Lent should be for us as well.

At the heart of our lengthy Gospel Reading from St. John, chapter 9, is the healing of the blind man. There is a basic difference here from other

miracles performed by the Lord. The blind man did not approach Jesus and ask to be healed; in this instance Jesus took the lead and went to him. Jesus fully expected the man to respond in faith, which he did. Jesus is coming to us in the same way during this Lenten period.

In order to show Him the faith He wants from us, we have to accept the fact that we may live in darkness, that we may hold things in our hearts that are not acceptable to the Lord. This is the time for us to awaken, to cleanse our hearts, to open our eyes and see. As it is reported in this Holy Gospel, "...he went and washed, and came back able to see." Now is the time for us to wash and seek the light, so that the Lord can confirm what He says in the Gospel: "I came into this world for judgment, so that those who do not see might see." The Lord is there for us, but we have to seek and see His Light, and then live accordingly.

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**ANNOUNCED MASSES**  
**March 25<sup>th</sup> – April 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2017**

<b>Saturday</b> 10:00 a.m.	<b>Mar. 25<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>ANNUNCIATION OF THE LORD</b> <i>(Mass intention available)</i>
<b>Saturday</b> 4:30 p.m.	<b>Mar. 25<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Sunday Mass of Anticipation</b> Adrian de Souza – RIP – by the family
<b>Sunday</b> 9:00 a.m.  11:00 a.m.	<b>Mar. 26<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Fourth Sunday of Lent</b> In Thanksgiving for all the blessings – by the Kramer family Zigmunt Dewinski – RIP – by the Depa family
<b>Monday</b>	<b>Mar. 27<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>NO MASS</b>
<b>Tuesday</b> 7:00 p.m.	<b>Mar. 28<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Weekday</b> Elizabeth Marques Costa – For Good Health – by Ana Lucia
<b>Wednesday</b> 9:00 a.m.	<b>Mar. 29<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Weekday</b> Louis Ottoni – RIP – by Celeste De Santi and family
<b>Thursday</b> 9:00 a.m.	<b>Mar. 30<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Weekday</b> Apolonia Francisco – RIP – by the family
<b>Friday</b> 9:00 a.m.	<b>Mar. 31<sup>st</sup></b>	<b>Weekday</b> Jessica Dy – Birthday Blessings – by Elena
<b>Saturday</b> 10:00 a.m.	<b>Apr. 1<sup>st</sup></b>	<b>Weekday</b> Florence Gadwah – RIP – by Janet Prasad
<b>Saturday</b> 4:30 p.m.	<b>Apr. 1<sup>st</sup></b>	<b>Sunday Mass of Anticipation</b> Gerald O'Donnell – RIP – by Charles Brocklehurst
<b>Sunday</b> 9:00 a.m.  11:00 a.m.	<b>Apr. 2<sup>nd</sup></b>	<b>Fifth Sunday of Lent</b> Ina Carvajal – RIP – by Mercedes and family Stella and Myron Karabin – RIP – by the Depa family

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*Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord,  
and let perpetual light shine upon them.  
May their souls and the souls of all the faithful departed  
through the mercy of God rest in peace.*

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## BE MY DISCIPLES NEWS



**Holy Spirit Day** at the Cathedral for Confirmation candidates will be on **Sunday, April 2, 2017.**

**Confirmation** will be on Saturday, June 3, 2017 at 4:30 p.m. Mass.

**First Eucharist** is scheduled on Saturday, June 10, 2017, at 4:30 p.m. Mass.

Please pray for our children and their families as they prepare for their sacraments.

## DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE: WEEK 4



**Women are creating a future filled with hope in Syria.** This week, open your heart to the reality of women living in a country at war. Listen to the voice of Hannan, a Syrian woman who tells us how our partner's training centres are helping to change the female workforce and the financial autonomy of women in her region. "Through the training course, I personally evolved a lot as a person. Today, I dream of teaching sewing and running a learning centre."

Thanks to your support during Share Lent this year, 280 Syrians will have access to an 11-week training course in sewing and psychosocial services!

Next week is Solidarity Sunday and the Share Lent collection will take place. Please, be generous!

## WAY OF THE CROSS



Everyone is invited to the Way of the Cross every Friday at 7:00 P.M. during this Lenten season.

## FLOWERS FOR EASTER



If you would like to contribute to beautifying our Church with Easter flowers, please place an envelope in the collection basket and mark on it "Easter flowers". If you include your name or envelope number, you will receive an income tax receipt for it at year end.

## INCOME TAX RECEIPTS



To our dear parishioners who used the envelope system for the weekly donation to the Parish in 2016, your income tax receipts are ready at the **Sacristy**. Please pick up your receipt either on the weekend after Mass or during the week, Monday to Friday, from 9:00 A.M. to 12:00 Noon. Thank you.