

*Lent 4A 2017*

*Out of the Darkness*

**In the beginning**, when God created the heavens and the earth, the Book of Genesis says that “*darkness* covered the abyss.” In the beginning before God created anything, before anything came into existence, there was a great darkness. But on the first day of creation, God said: “Let there be light, and there was light.” And ever since, we have stood between the darkness that would pull us back into the chaos of sin, and the light of God. This is why Saint Paul reminds us in today’s second reading: “Once you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord, so live as children of the light.”

**The gospel we just heard** is a dramatic portrayal of this struggle between light and darkness. Not only was the man of today’s gospel blind, he had been born blind; he had never seen the light of day. Through no fault of his own, he lived in a world of darkness. Others could tell him about the light, but he had never seen the light. But when this man meets Jesus, Jesus brings him into the light. *In a powerful act of a new creation*, Jesus opens the eyes of the man who had been born blind. *In a powerful act of a new creation*, Jesus says let there be light. *In a powerful act of a new creation*, Jesus brings this man who had lived in the darkness into the light of God.

**The man Jesus cures is you.** The man Jesus cures is all of us because, before we knew Christ, we lived in the darkness of sin and error. *We did not know God*, and so we did not know the light. *We did not know Christ*, and so we did not know the truth. But when Christ came into our lives, we were brought into the glorious light of God’s

presence. This is why Saint Paul says in: “Awake, O Sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will give you light.” For once we dead and now you are alive.

**There are moments, however,** when we are tempted to return to the darkness. There are moments when we prefer the darkness to the glorious light of Christ. There are moments we think we are living in the light but we are actually living in the darkness. The Pharisees thought they were living in the light, but because they refused to believe Jesus came from God they were living in the darkness. Something similar happens when we prefer the light of our own making to the light of Christ, when we substitute our values for the gospel.

**I see this happen all the time.** I see people drift away from the faith in exchange for a purely secular way of life. I see people who think they are enlightened, but to live in the darkness. I have in people who profess their faith Christ but act as people who are in the darkness.

**This is why** Lent is important. Lent calls us out of the darkness into the light of Christ. It requires us to choose between the light and the darkness. It reminds us that God has called us into the glorious light of Christ. On this Fourth Sunday of Lent, as we approach the great mystery of Easter, let us set aside all those things that would pull us back into the darkness—anger, the refusal to forgive, our attachment to the things we have—so that we can enter into the glorious light of Christ.