



Bringing Home the Word

Fourth Sunday of Lent | March 26, 2017

Seeing as God Sees

By Mary Katharine Deeley

“Do you see what I’m saying?” The question came at the end of a difficult conversation about a hurtful remark I’d made. I hadn’t intended it to hurt—I was going for a cheap laugh in a group of people, and I got it. But, as my colleague made clear to me, the laugh came at the expense of her comfort and, to some extent, her dignity.

The very fact that she had to call it to my attention meant that I had not been paying attention. I didn’t “see” her—I saw only myself scoring laugh points with the

seven or eight people we were with. Let’s face it: I was blind to her and to the effect of my words.

In today’s Scriptures, Samuel is chastised for his narrow vision because he believes a king must surely look like Eliab, someone of stature and importance. He saw only what impressed him. He couldn’t look into the heart as God did, so he didn’t see as God did.

The Pharisees, too, are called to account for their own constricted sight, which couldn’t accept that a man born blind might know the presence of God more surely than they ever could. When we’re convinced of our own righteousness and consider ourselves more important than anyone else, we become blind to others and to God.

Today our prayers ask God for holy sight—the grace to see the world and all in it as God sees. Many things can make us blind, but God can open the eyes of our heart if we simply come to him and ask him to help us see. †

Sunday Readings

1 Samuel 16:1b, 6–7, 10–13a

“Then Samuel, with the horn of oil in hand, anointed [David] in the midst of his brothers.”

Ephesians 5:8–14

“Live as children of light, for light produces every kind of goodness and righteousness and truth.”

John 9:1–41

“Jesus said to them, ‘If you were blind, you would have no sin; but now you are saying, “We see,” so your sin remains.’”

*Sometimes we
are blind to the effect
of our words.*

A Word From Pope Francis

We all have within us some areas, some parts of our heart that are not alive, that are a little dead...a true spiritual necrosis! And when we are in this situation, we know it, we want to get out but we can’t. Only the power of Jesus...can help us come out of these atrophied zones of the heart, these tombs of sin, which we all have. We are all sinners...all of us, who are sinners, do not end up attached to sin, but... hear what Jesus said to Lazarus: “He cried out with a loud voice: ‘Lazarus, come out’” (John 11:43).

—Homily,
April 6, 2014



REFLECTION QUESTIONS

QUESTIONS REFLECTION

- What have I been blind to this Lent?
- How can I begin to see through God’s eyes this Lent?



Just Jesus?

By Kathleen M. Basi

At first blush, the catch phrase “just Jesus” makes a lot of sense. Christianity is, after all, a lifelong pursuit of a relationship with a person—Jesus. That’s the critical thing, and yet it’s easy to get stuck on rules and regulations instead of relationship. As the saying goes, it’s one thing to know about Christ; to actually know him—that’s something different.

On the other hand, relationships walk hand in hand with responsibility. Parents must put their convenience second to

their children’s needs. Spouses must count each other’s well-being as equal to their own. Coworkers must treat each other with respect.

The trouble with the phrase “just Jesus” is that it seems to suggest our actions aren’t really important. But Jesus didn’t just sit on a mountainside telling nice stories. He spent his days healing the sick and offering acceptance, forgiveness, and a new start to people who thought they were beyond salvation. He chose a simple life and the pursuit of God in all things, to the point where he didn’t really have a home or a job or any of the security

human beings crave. He put God’s will first, even when that meant giving up his very life. That was how he built relationships.

Jesus lives within every person, and that means our relationship with every other person is our relationship with Jesus. It’s a whole lot more than a profession of faith or a pious feeling. It’s expressed through what we do. It must shape our words. It must direct every action and decision, from the small (like what to see at the movies) to the life-changing (like natural family planning). †

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Be More Like the Divine

By Fr. Bruce Lewandowski, CSsR

On news and information services, reporters often refer to terrorists as radicals. This automatically puts *radical* on the list of bad words—but it’s not bad. The difference between extremists and radicals is simple. Radical means to return to the root or origin of something. So a radical Christian would seem very similar to Jesus or a radical Muslim would appear very much like Muhammad. An extremist is one who holds ideas or beliefs that can result in action that is beyond the norm of what is normally expected or acceptable.

Pope Benedict XVI wrote in *Deus*

Caritas Est (2005) that “the Christian who prays does not claim to be able to change God’s plans or correct what he has foreseen. Rather he seeks an encounter with the Father of Jesus Christ.” And still further, “A personal relationship with God and an abandonment to his will can prevent man from being demeaned and save him from falling prey to the teaching of fanaticism and terrorism.” Prayer seeks an encounter. Relationship is the key.

The disciples spent a lot of time with Jesus, and in doing so they began to speak as he spoke and act as he acted. They became Christlike simply by spending time with him. Something of Jesus rubbed off on his followers. People could see Jesus in them. Radical prayer calls us back to this kind of relationship: spending time with Jesus; lingering before the Lord; passing time in the

presence of the Holy One; and staying with him long enough to have something of Jesus rub off on us. Through radical prayer, we start to look, think, and act like the Divine, and others can see something of Jesus in us. †

Source: *Liguorian*,
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WEEKDAY READINGS

March 27–April 1

Mon. Lenten Weekday:
Is 65:17–21 / Jn 4:43–54
Tue. Lenten Weekday:
Ez 47:1–9, 12 / Jn 5:1–16
Wed. Lenten Weekday:
Is 49:8–15 / Jn 5:17–30

Thu. Lenten Weekday:
Ex 32:7–14 / Jn 5:31–47
Fri. Lenten Weekday:
Wis 2:1a, 12–22 / Jn 7:1–2, 10, 25–30
Sat. Lenten Weekday:
Jer 11:18–20 / Jn 7:40–53

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Lord, you are the Word of God that shows me what is good, right, and true. Make me a faithful witness to your Word.

— From *Mindful Meditations for Every Day in Ordinary Time*
Rev. Warren J. Savage
and Mary Ann McSweeney