**Five Minute Jesus**

**Using the Gospel for Prayer** – **Fourth Sunday in Lent** - March 22, 2020

*It’s simple. 1. Read the Gospel for the following Sunday slowly, reflecting on the story it tells. 2. Reflect on the questions assigned for each day. 3. Make some resolution about how what you read can be lived that day. 4. Then thank God for speaking to you through this reflection.*

**The Gospel according to John 9:1, 6-9, 13-17, 34-38\***

**As Jesus passed by he saw a man blind from birth. 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.” They brought the one who was once blind to the Pharisees. Now Jesus had made clay and opened his eyes on a sabbath. So then the Pharisees also asked him how he was able to see.**

**He said to them, “He put clay on my eyes, and I washed, and now I can see.” So some of the Pharisees said, “This man is not from God, because he does not keep the sabbath.” But others said, “How can a sinful man do such signs?” And there was a division among them. So they said to the blind man again, “What do you have to say about him, since he opened your eyes?” He said, “He is a prophet.” They answered and said to him, “You were born totally in sin, and are you trying to teach us?” Then they threw him out. When Jesus heard that they had thrown him out, he found him and said, “Do you believe in the Son of Man?”**

**He answered and said, “Who is he, sir, that I may believe in him?” Jesus said to him, “You have seen him, and the one speaking with you is he.” He said, “I do believe, Lord,” and he worshiped him.** *\*Note: this is the shorter version of the Gospel; you might hear the longer one read at mass.*

**Sunday**

Was there something in this reading that spoke to me? Comforted me? Challenged me? What was it? Why did it have this effect on me?

**Monday**

Unlike many healings in the Bible where Jesus only speaks a word and the healing occurs, this healing involves touching; it involves spitting. It is intimate, physical – once could almost say sacramental. Moreover, it requires a response; in order to be healed the blind man must ***go***, he must ***wash***. Have I ever had a similar intimate, even physical experience of God’s presence in my life (remember sacraments can be, should be, such moments)? What was it? Did it require something of me in return? How has it affected the way I believe and live?

**Tuesday**

After he went and washed, the man born blind could now see. Have I ever been called blind and refused to see it? Have I ever had the experience of realizing that I have been blinded by culture, privilege, or prejudice? Why am I resistant to “going “ and “washing”? What am I afraid of seeing?

**Wednesday**

In English we have the saying “He could not see the forest for the trees” – to be so focused on the details, that we are blind to the big picture. Despite the fact that a man born blind could now see, all the Pharisees could “see” was that Jesus had made clay and healed on a Sabbath – and according to the Pharisees, Jesus had broken the Third Commandment. What were the Pharisees blind to? Are there times where I can’t see the “forest”, because I am too upset, angry at, afraid of, or sad about the “trees”? When are they? What do I need to be healed of?

**Thursday**

Was Jesus a sinner or a saint? When the religious leaders asked the man, who had been given his sight, he replied that Jesus was a prophet; that is, a person who speaks for God. Even then the leaders are stubborn in their refusal to see. And we see the source of their stubbornness is pride; they accuse him of teaching *them*, though the man born blind was “born in sin”, and they throw him out; he is now not even a human; he is treated like garbage. Have I ever seen the blindness, the prejudice, the damage that pride causes? Have I seen it in others? Where do I see it in myself?

**Friday**

We often think that to be a person of faith means affirming commandments, creeds, catechisms. It is an intellectual exercise. Yet the man born blind does not even know who Jesus is. Still he worships him. What does the end of this story suggest to me about the faith of the man born blind? About my own faith?