

Week 6 of Lent / the Great Lent

1. Gathering & Prayer

- Take a few moments to recall the previous session. What particularly touched you? What new insight about the human struggle, or divine grace, did you receive? Share as you wish.
- Opening Prayer, giving thanks for the insights and asking that our hearts may remain open to returning more fully to God.

2. Coptic Orthodox Gospel

Theme: The Man Born Blind

Gospel: John 9:1-41



Reflection

This is an example of humans who were born blind spiritually unable to see the light of truth, that is Christ Himself. They need Christ's miraculous work of opening their eyes to see Him, and to know the truth.

- How did the blindness of the Man Born Blind differ from the blindness of the Pharisees?
- In what ways does this healing relate to Jesus' statement about being "the light of the world"? (John 8:12 and 9:5)
- Describe how your spiritual eyes have been opened during this Lenten period.

Reflections on the Coptic Orthodox Gospel from a Protestant perspective

*This one thing I know!
This one thing I know!
God in great mercy pardoned me,
Snapped sin's fetters and set me free;
Once I was blind but now I see:
This one thing I know!*

Sydney Cox

God's first act recorded in scripture was the creation of light – and it was good. (Genesis 1:3-4) Can you imagine being unable to see the beauty of God's creation? Can you imagine the joy of having that ability restored in your life?

Today, restoration of physical sight is an everyday occurrence, but even so, it still brings such joy to those who have this gift of sight restored. In Jesus' day, restoration of physical sight was a rarity, a miraculous event that was never expected, and in this narrative, an event that was just not believed.

But there is a much more significant meaning in this narrative. It is the restoration of spiritual sight to the blind. It is an illustration and reiteration of Jesus' statement, "*I am the light of the world.*" (John 8:12, 9:5)

Not only were this man's physical eyes restored, but so too were his spiritual eyes. In John 9:35-38 we read of a further encounter between Jesus and the man. In this encounter we see the man coming to the realisation that Jesus is the Son of Man, believing that Jesus is the Son of Man, and worshipping the Son of Man.

Pray that at this time we too may have our spiritual eyes opened to see Jesus and to know the truth.

3. Closing Prayer

In silence, choose one feature from the time together and pray from it. Ask the Holy Spirit to direct you to something that God thinks is particularly important.

This may involve a feeling—encouraging or discouraging. It may be a word or gesture that has significance for you. Or it may be something that is emerging that seemed at the time rather insignificant.

Look at it. Pray about it. Allow the prayer to arise spontaneously from your heart—whether of intercession, praise, repentance, or gratitude.

Some people may choose to share a word, or an insight, or a prayer: others may prefer to remain silent.

Say Together

God of new life, through the waters of Baptism each and every one of us is called to be a minister of the Church. Renew our call so that with passion, new vision and zeal we may together journey towards growth as your Church. May we your faithful people be:— brave enough to proclaim the Good News, enthused enough to share our story, loving enough to only see the good in others, and kind enough that our actions reflect the light and hope of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

In all we are and in all we do, let us give glory to the Father, Son and Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now and will be forever. Amen.

You may wish to offer one other a sign of peace as this time draws to a close.