

FATHER MARK SCHULTE
HOMILY
FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT (A)
MARCH 15, 2026

“Divine Medicine”

My Brothers and Sisters, today’s Gospel reading might be one of those where it becomes easy to get lost in the details. It requires some patience before arriving at the point that Jesus finally delivers (Jn 9:1-41).

A man is blind from birth. Jesus makes mud from the soil with His own saliva and smears it on the man’s eyes and tells the man to go and wash it off. He washed it off and then he was able to see. The two healing ingredients used here are soil and saliva. Mud is made by using the earth or soil. The origin of the saliva or moisture is Jesus Himself, and Jesus is Divine. He is God. We have a Divine substance, saliva mixed with an earthly substance, soil. This act by Jesus may seem strange however soil has healing qualities within itself. It contains minerals for our health such as salt. Some animals will eat soil from time to time for health reasons. Some medicines such as Ivermectin are derived from the soil. The name Adam means earth. Adam was made by God from the earth. God breathed His Divine Spirit into Adam, and he became a living being (1).

The question was asked whether the blindness of the man was due to the sin of his parents, his mother and father. In a direct way we could say no. But indirectly, yes. All physical maladies are the sign of a dying body, and death is the result of Adam’s sin and Adam is the father of all humanity and the ancestral father or parent of the blind man (Rm 5:12).

Jesus became incarnate by becoming a man of the earth like Adam (CCC 461). Jesus is the new Adam. Jesus’ body itself becomes the healing remedy for the cause of death which is sin. The mud becomes a symbol of the combination of the Divine and the human or ‘hypostatic union’ (Heb 10:5-7) (CCC 251, 466, 468-469). The soil represents the human part, and the saliva is the Divine part. The Divine mud becomes a healing salve for blindness when it is humbly accepted and believed in, which the blind man did. All true physical healing thus has a Divine origin for only God can truly heal the human person. Human beings such as doctors co-operate in this healing process. They become co-healers. Much like the title of Co-Redemptrix for the Blessed Virgin Mary. Jesus is the cause and source of our redemption, but the Blessed Virgin Mary co-operated in a most intimate way in the redemptive process. More intimate than any other human being.

In the Gospel story, the physical blindness of the man born blind becomes a vehicle to help arrive at and understand a more serious form of blindness that Jesus will eventually address. The pharisees are constantly attempting to accuse others of sinfulness even to the point of calling Jesus a sinner, because He somehow broke the sabbath law by healing on the Sabbath.

The blind man could “see” metaphorically the true identity of Jesus, yet the pharisees could not. He called Jesus “Lord!” Jesus said, “I came into the world to divide and judge, to make the sightless see and the seeing blind”.

The issue is not physical blindness, but spiritual blindness. The pharisees and others were not physically blind, but spiritually blind. They were constantly pointing out the sins of others but were unwilling to “see” their own, yet in so doing claimed to be free of sin. They became willfully blind with a self-imposed blindness and because of their willful blindness Jesus said, “Your sin remains”, in other words you are not forgiven.

Jesus is the Divine physician. Only He can bring true and lasting healing. The pharisees and others rejected Jesus, therefore, they could not be healed.

The combination of the soil and saliva formed a Divine healing salve for the eyes. We are healed by a Divine salve of another form. Wheat bread grows from the earth. But it becomes the Body and Blood, Soul, and Divinity of Jesus Christ at the words of consecration in the form of Holy Communion. Thus, the Holy Eucharist is Divine medicine for our soul when by the example of the blind man we come to believe in it.

The pride of the pharisees caused them to become blind to the truth about the identity of Jesus and their own sinfulness. During this season of Lent, let us allow Jesus to cure any blindness within us especially regarding our own sins. Let us not allow pride to prevent us from seeking His forgiveness in the Sacrament of Confession, as we hear the words of Jesus echo in our own ears. That because of our pride “our sin remains”. The words of an old hymn come to mind:

- Amazing grace how sweet the sound. That saved a wretch like me.
- I once was lost, but now am found.
- Was blind but now I see.

(1) Liturgy of the Hours, Vol. II, p. 276, St. Augustine (Tract. 34, 8-9: CCL 36. 315-316.

NOTE: CCC = Catechism of the Catholic Church