

**4th Sunday of Lent (A)**  
**Keep Walking In His Light**

1 Samuel 16:1b,6-7,10-13a; Psalm 23:1-3a,3b-4,5,6; Ephesians 5:8-14; John 9:1-41

Dear brothers and sisters,

It is Laetare Sunday!

Laetare Sunday, the fourth Sunday of Lent, is named after the Mass entrance antiphon, "Laetare, Jerusalem" (Rejoice, O Jerusalem) from Isaiah 66:10. Priests wear rose-colored robes, marking the midpoint to Easter as we remember and celebrate Jesus' victory on the Cross.

This call to rejoice focuses on Jesus as the true light—He dispels darkness, brings life, and guides us.

In the first reading, the prophet Samuel is sent to anoint a new king. Seeing Jesse's strong sons, he thinks, "Surely the anointed is here before the Lord" (1 Sam. 16:6). But God reminds him not to judge by appearance: "Not as man sees does God see; because man sees appearance, but the Lord looks into the heart" (1 Sam. 16:7).

We are drawn to what is visible and loud—beauty, wealth, popularity, power. But God looks deeper and sees the heart. This is why David, the youngest and a shepherd, becomes the chosen one, even though no one expected it; he wasn't even in the lineup.

This message reassures us when we feel unseen or ordinary. Even if others overlook our struggles, intentions, or quiet acts of love, God sees our hearts, which is what matters most.

In the second reading, Saint Paul says, "You were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord" (Eph. 5:8). Through Jesus, we shift from confusion in darkness to the clarity of His light. Without God, we lose direction and cannot tell right from wrong.

When Christ enters our lives, He becomes our light, guiding us to see what truly matters and leading us to peace. As Paul urges, "Live as children of light"—so let your life reflect the light you have received from Jesus (Eph. 5:8).

Turning to the Gospel, we see how Jesus heals a man born blind. This miracle isn't just about physical blindness; it also symbolizes spiritual blindness. It illustrates a struggle: darkness hides, while light reveals. One person chooses light, while the other stays in darkness.

Ironically, the man who was blind begins to see. Meanwhile, the religious leaders—the Pharisees—have good eyesight but remain blind. The formerly blind man gradually comes to recognize Jesus. At first, during the inquiry, he says, "A man called Jesus healed me." Later, he declares, "He is a prophet." Then he says Jesus must be from God. Finally, after meeting Jesus, who asked if he believed, he replied, "Lord, I believe" (cf. Jn 9:11, 17, 31, 38). His eyes are open—not just physically, but spiritually.

In contrast, the Pharisees refuse to see. Often, pride blinds us more than darkness. This kind of blindness occurs when we shut ourselves off from genuinely caring about others. This blindness is especially heartbreaking in families and communities.

Our own forms of blindness might differ from the Pharisees', perhaps showing up as distraction, forgetfulness in prayer, or worries and feelings that stop us from noticing God. Often, busy schedules,

phone alerts, or endless tasks and entertainment take up our attention, leaving little time to be still with God. Stress, rushing, or feeling like we always need to be available make it hard to see God clearly. The deepest darkness might be not seeing God in our lives at all.

The Gospel poses a profound question: What darkness keeps me from walking in the light? We can be blind to our faults, others' needs, or God's blessings, or sometimes choose not to see the truth and walk in unforgiveness—both of which keep us from Christ's light.

This Lent, let's turn away from distractions and look inward, focusing our hearts on Christ, the source of true vision. If we humble ourselves and let Him open our eyes, Laetare Sunday becomes a day of real joy—because we are learning to walk in His light.

Let's choose to keep following that light throughout Lent and beyond.

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Pastor