

4th Sunday of Lent. March 30, 2025.

Optional Readings for OCIA Program

First reading:

Prophet Samuel Anoints David as Israel's next King

(1 Sam 16: 1-13. New International Version)

King Saul was the first anointed King (Monarch) of Israel. He was known for his courage, generosity, and striking appearance. However, Saul's reign was marked by repeated disobedience, particularly in the areas of warfare and sacrifice. (see 1 Sam chapter 15) When we gloss over sin to protect what we have or for material gain, we are not being shrewd; we are disobeying God. ***Selective obedience is just another form of disobedience.*** Thus, King Saul was rejected by God, and in his place, a young man named David was anointed as Israel's next King.

The question for our reflection is: Do I gloss over any aspect of God's command? Look deeply within to examine concerns such as greed, selfishness, pride, arrogance, and looking down on others.

"But Samuel replied, 'Does the Lord delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as much as in obeying the Lord?' To obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed is better than the fat of rams. For rebellion is like the sin of divination, and arrogance like the evil of idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the Lord, he has rejected you as king." (1 Sam 15: 22, 23)

Second text Ephesians 5:8-14.

"Brothers and sisters, you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light (for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness and truth) and find out what pleases the Lord. Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them. It is shameful even to mention what the disobedient do in secret. But everything exposed by the light becomes visible—and everything that is illuminated becomes a light. This is why it is said: "Wake up, sleeper, rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you." (Ephesians 5:8-14. New International Version)

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According to St Paul, our pasts may have dark times of cynicism, despair, shame, or self-doubt. Satan desires to lead us back into that darkness. We must reject Satan by intentionally living out what pleases the Lord. Rather than dwelling in our dark past, St Paul encourages us to live as children of light.

### **Sunday Gospel: Jesus Heals a Man Born Blind. John Chapter 9.**

“Jesus heard that they had thrown him out, and when he found him, he said, “Do you believe in the Son of Man?” “Who is he, sir?” the man asked. “Tell me so that I may believe in him.” Jesus said, “You have now seen him; in fact, he is the one speaking with you.” Then the man said, **“Lord, I believe,” and he worshiped him.**” (John 9: 35-38)

In this passage, Jesus heals a young man who born blind. Following his healing and encounter with Jesus, he recognized and worshipped Jesus the Lord.

We notice that this young blind man’s perception of Jesus progressively deepens as the story unfolds. First, the man recognizes Jesus as a **“man,”** then a “prophet.” Later, he refers to Jesus as “he is from God,” and finally, he concludes his encounter with Jesus by acknowledging Jesus as the **“Lord”** worthy of worship. Then the man said, **“Lord, I believe,” and he worshiped him”.** Does this narrative challenge our minds to reach the same conclusion and our hearts to respond in the same way? Jesus Christ is the healer of our wounds and our illnesses. Jesus Christ is the Lord. May we live our lives responding to the Lord with adoration and worship predominantly in the Holy Eucharist.

### **Station of the Cross (The Way of the Cross for Young Christians. Third station)**

**Jesus Falls: Let us pray.** O God, I know there are a lot of times that I began to do things and then get tired of them. Or else, I don’t do them too well and I want to forget about them. Sometimes, I get hollered at in school because I don’t pay attention to what I should be doing. Help me, God, to be like Your Son – help me to keep at the things I started and to complete them as best I can. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

God bless you.

Fr. Martin Ezeihuaku, MSP.

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