

4th Sunday of Lent: March 10th: “Lord, I believe, and I worship you”.

In our **first reading today the prophet Samuel anoints David** as the future king of Israel. Appearance does not reveal one’s true character and values, God knows the inner person. Anointing is a sign of holiness, it sets someone/objects apart for the service of God. (1 Samuel 16: 1, 6-7, 10-13).

The second chapter in the booklet for our **Small Faith Group (Be My Witness)** talks about ***Encountering Christ***. There we read the interesting story of Bob – questions, doubts, a feeling of unsettledness, drifting away from God, and then coming back again to God, to the church. We also read that Bob joined RCIA (now called OCIA) leading him to a personal encounter with Christ through the Bible, faith sharing, prayer, and liturgy. That was a powerful life journey with Christ and a deepening relationship with the Lord. These can be part of the spiritual journey of our lives. The third chapter of the book talks about the Come Holy Spirit.

Gospel of John (9: 1-41)

John chapter nine records the healing of an unnamed man who had been blind from birth, a miracle performed by Jesus, and their subsequent dealings with the Pharisees who accused Jesus of not respecting the sabbath law. We see here four different reactions to Jesus. The neighbors revealed surprise and skepticism; the Pharisees showed disbelief and prejudice; the parents believed but they kept quiet for fear of excommunication by the authorities; and the healed man showed consistent, growing faith. Each reaction to Jesus allowed the man to reach a clearer understanding of the one who healed him. ***He, therefore, not only gained physical sight but also spiritual sight as he recognized Jesus first as a prophet, and then as his Lord.*** Think about this, on that day, as he sat and begged on the road, the last person the blind man expected to encounter was the Messiah, and that was the person who saw him, pointed him out, and restored his sight.

“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) When you encounter Christ in your life, you begin to see him differently. The longer you walk with Christ, the better you will understand who He is. If you want to know more about Jesus, keep trusting him in every area of your life.

There was a great moment of revelation in last Sunday’s gospel passage when the Samaritan woman encountered Christ: “The woman said, “I know that Messiah” (called Christ) “is coming. When he comes, he will explain everything to us.” ***Then Jesus declared, “I, the one speaking to you - I am he.”*** ... Then, leaving her water jar, the woman went back to the town and said to the people, “Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did. Could this be the Messiah?” They came out of the town and made their way toward him.” (John 4: 25-30).

After his resurrection, Christ appeared to his disciples, they were happy to see the Lord but Thomas who was absent during that visit, refused to believe the story of his friends. So, Christ made a second visit, “Jesus said Thomas, reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe.” ***Thomas said to him, “My Lord and my God!”*** Then Jesus told him, “Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.” (John 20:27-29)

“Christ wants us to put every ounce of our trust in him – and our vision will deepen. This in many ways is the heart of the matter: de-center your ego and re-center it on Christ. And now that you see, believe!” (Bishop Robert Barron).

Have you ever wished you could actually see Jesus, touch Him, and hear His voice? Are there times you want to sit down with Him and get His advice? God’s plan is better and wiser. Christ has not limited himself to one physical body; He wants to be with you at all times. Even now Christ is present with you in the form of the Holy Spirit. ***Christ is truly and fully present to us at the Holy Communion.*** Just recognize him, talk to Him, listen to Him. You can also find his words to you in the pages of the Bible. Yes, Jesus Christ can be as real to you today as he was to St Thomas, to the Samaritan woman, to the healed man who was born blind.

Prayer for us today: Lord, I believe. I worship you. Amen.

Fr Martin Ezeihuaku, MSP.