

Sunday of the Fourth Week of Lent

Year A

I Sam 16: 1,6-7,10-13
Ps 23: 1-3a, 3b-4, 5, 6
Eph 5: 8-14
John 9: 1,6-9,13-17,34-38

Alvin D. Paligutan, O.S.A
St. Augustine High School
San Diego, California

Light of the World

Growing up as a child in the Philippines, a Third World country, I experienced living without electricity for almost a month. During the typhoon season (especially June through August), the government-controlled electric company would cut power in some suburbs of metropolitan Manila, the nation's capital. Typhoons are tropical storms similar to hurricanes in Florida, Louisiana and the Caribbean. As an elementary school student, there were many nights when I did my homework using candlelight, but then kerosene lamps were better because they were brighter; they gave more light and so I could see more clearly and do my homework better.

We certainly need light to function, to live and to see, day and night. God created light – the sun, the moon and the stars. But aside from the natural and artificial lights we now enjoy, thanks be to God, our Creator God is also the light of our hearts and minds, who leads and guides us every day of our lives. In John's Gospel, Jesus says, "*I am the light of the world.*" In this story, Jesus heals a blind man so he can see. In our blindness, in our weaknesses, in our darkest hours, faith in God through Jesus Christ will allow us to see again, to be relieved and comforted, to be forgiven and to be converted, so that we can continue to be followers of Christ. We will be able to see again through our eyes of faith, gifts of God to all of us. We only need to pray to God, to get closer to Him and to trust in Him through Christ Jesus.

Our first reading from the First Book of Samuel says that God does not see things the way we do, because God looks into the heart. God looks into our hearts and He knows what's there. Just like Jesus Christ, the saints and so many faithful people, we are called to be "lights of the world," especially to be lights to each other. This is one of the deepest desires we have in our hearts. And how do we do that – to be light to each other? We have to continue to love God; to love one another; to forgive each other our sins seventy times seven times; to help those who are poor, needy and weak; to visit the sick; to be patient with each other's weaknesses and to promote peace and justice in our world today.

Today's second reading, from Paul's Letter to the Ephesians, says that we have "*to live as children of light, for light produces every kind of goodness and righteousness*

and truth. Everything exposed by the light becomes visible.” We already started our Lenten journeys and we continue with it; we continue the practices we do such as fasting, abstinence, prayer and reflection, participating in the sacraments such Eucharist and Reconciliation, giving alms to the poor and needy, volunteering our time to help the poor and so forth. These are other ways in which we can live as children of light and lights of the world, which our good Lord is always inviting us to.

By loving, forgiving and doing these good works of faith, hope and charity, we make God’s kingdom visible and real here on earth. Through our good deeds and Christian living, we proclaim to all peoples the good news of salvation through Jesus Christ, the Light of the World, and we spread peace, reconciliation, justice and love throughout our planet. May God continue the good work He already started in all of us, so that we can continue to live in the light and truly be the lights of the world our Creator created us to be.