

Liturgy of the Word with Children
Fourth Sunday of Lent, (*Laetare Sunday*) Year A
15 March 2026
John 9:1, 6-9, 13-17, 34-38

Catechist Background

In today's Gospel reading, the healing of the man born blind, invites us to consider the physical and spiritual aspects of sight and light. In the first part of the reading, we hear Jesus' response to a prevalent belief of his time: that misfortune and disability were the result of sin. Because of that belief Jesus is asked if it was this man's sin or those of his parents which caused him to be blind. Jesus does not answer directly, but instead gives the question an entirely different dimension: he says that through this man's disability, God's power will be made manifest, then Jesus heals him.

Today is sometimes called "Laetare Sunday". "Laetare" is the first word of the Mass in Latin today and means "Be joyful". It is the halfway point in Lent, when the mood becomes a little brighter, therefore in many parishes the colours of the day are rose (a lighter version of Lenten purple).

Setting the Scene

Ask the children:

- Have you ever found it impossible to understand something: a puzzle, a maths question etc?
- Have you ever struggled to see what to do in a situation?
- What did that feel like? Were you scared or angry?
- Did someone help you to see what to do, to make it clear, to help you to understand?
- What was it like for you to be helped? What was it like to understand what previously had been impossible?
- Have you ever been blindfolded and had to rely on someone to help you to find your way?

We Say Sorry

We begin by remembering the times when we have chosen not to follow you, Lord.

Leader: Lord, by water and the Spirit you give us new life, Lord have mercy.

All: **Lord, have mercy.**

Leader: Christ, by the cross you brought pardon and hope, Christ have mercy.

All: **Christ, have mercy.**

Leader: Lord, by your death you brought peace and forgiveness, Lord have mercy.

All: **Lord, have mercy.**

We Pray (1)

God, help us to listen to your word so that we may see your glory. Amen.

Gospel Intro

This Sunday the colour in Mass is light purple (pink/rose), because today is a little celebration in the middle of Lent. In today's Gospel, we hear how Jesus healed a man who others wouldn't help.

Gospel Acclamation

Gospel: John 9:1, 6-9, 13-17, 34-38

(The resource book 'Sunday – Weekly Leader Guide – Year A offers a dialogue reading of the Gospel which you might consider using.)

Reflecting on the Reading with Children

- What did Jesus say and do in today's Gospel?
- Ask each child to say out loud one thing they like looking at.
- Remind them how much we need our eyes and that we might not realise this unless we ever know what it's like when our eyes don't work or we've been blindfolded.

- Do you think life was easy for the blind man in this reading before he met Jesus? Why (not)?
- Was the man pleased that he met Jesus and that Jesus healed him?
- What did he do and say about Jesus afterwards (He told Jesus he believed in him, and he praised Jesus even when the Pharisees tried to make him say that Jesus was a sinner for healing on the Sabbath.)
- Did the other Jews around the healed man 'see' that Jesus was special? (No, they were 'blind' in a way);
- After he was healed, the man was able to see, but he also now had faith in Jesus too;
- Sometimes we are blind too: we can't see that we need help, and that we can help others.
- We need Jesus to help us, to help us "see" and then to help others in need

Response

With their agreement, blindfold one of the children;

- Ask them what is like once the blindfold is on: do they feel happy, nervous, confused...?;
- Ask three other children to take turns leading the blindfolded child round the room;
 - *You might make a little bit of an obstacle course (make sure everyone stays safe in this);*
- Once they have returned to the front, remove the blindfold.
- Ask the child who was blindfolded, what it was like to be led by someone else;
- Ask the children who led the blindfolded child what it was like to help someone in need.
- Ask all the children:
 - Could those leading have made the blind child fall over or bump into something (yes)
 - Would that have been a loving thing to do? (no!)

Who in our area might feel 'blind' and in need of people to 'see' for them and steer them?

- the homeless and the poor,
- people who come here from other countries in search of freedom, a job, a school for their children, doctors and hospitals to cure their illnesses.

Tell them: many of these people cannot speak English (very well). They may have come to a new country or area and need help to see how things work here.

Ask: Do you think it would be hard to come to a new country if you couldn't speak the language?
[The children may be aware of some of these people living in your parish, they may know children who do not have many things and/or people new to this country who struggle with English.]

Ask: What could you do to help people like this?

Tell them:

- The blind man accepted the gifts Jesus gave to him: healing and faith;
- God gives us all different gifts;
- It is important to see the gifts which others have and to share our gifts with others.

We Believe

Relate the Creed to what you have shared with the children by asking these questions and inviting the children to reply, 'I do.':

- Do you believe that God wants us to share what we have?
- Do you believe that Jesus is the Light of the World who brings light to all dark places?
- Do you believe in the Holy Spirit who helps us see what God is like?
- Do you believe in the Church, in which we meet and learn about God?

We Pray (2)

Again, relate the Prayer of the Faithful to the Gospel reading by saying: 'You gave new sight to the blind man and the gift of faith, and so we pray...'

Leader: We pray for Christian leaders, that their lives are modelled on Jesus. Lord in your mercy,
All: **Hear our prayer.**

Leader: We pray for places in the world where there is suffering, that people will help others in need. Lord in your mercy,

All: **Hear our prayer.**

Leader: We pray for those who, like the man who Jesus healed, might be ignored because of their beliefs. Lord in your mercy,

All: **Hear our prayer.**

Leader: We pray for our friends and families, that they may grow closer to you in Lent. Lord in your mercy,

All: **Hear our prayer.**

Leader: God, we know you hear our prayers. Help us to hear your voice in our lives and to trust in your love. We make all our prayers through Christ our Lord.

All: **Amen.**

