

Holy Assumption Orthodox Church
Celebrating 125 years witnessing to the Apostolic Faith

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Marblehead, OH 43440

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***Holy Assumption Orthodox Church is a parish of the Orthodox Church in America,
Diocese of the Midwest***

JUNE 9, 2024

SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER PASCHA
SUNDAY OF THE BLIND MAN

EPISTLE: Acts 16:16-34

In those days, a certain slave girl possessed with a spirit of divination met us, who brought her masters much profit by fortune-telling. This girl followed Paul and us, and cried out, saying, "These men are the servants of the Most High God, who proclaim to us the way of salvation." And this she did for many days. But Paul, greatly annoyed, turned and said to the spirit, "I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her." And he came out that very hour. But when her masters saw that their hope of profit was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace to the authorities. And they brought them to the magistrates, and said, "These men, being Jews, exceedingly trouble our city; and they teach customs which are not lawful for us, being Romans, to receive or observe." Then the multitude rose up together against them; and the magistrates tore off their clothes and commanded them to be beaten with rods. And when they had laid many stripes on them, they threw them into prison, commanding the jailer to keep them securely. Having received such a charge, he put them into the inner prison and fastened their feet in the stocks. But at midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them. Suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened and everyone's chains were loosed. And the keeper of the prison, awaking from sleep and seeing the prison doors open, supposing the prisoners had fled, drew his sword and was about



Healing of the Blind Man

to receive or observe." Then the multitude rose up together against them; and the magistrates tore off their clothes and commanded them to be beaten with rods. And when they had laid many stripes on them, they threw them into prison, commanding the jailer to keep them securely. Having received such a charge, he put them into the inner prison and fastened their feet in the stocks. But at midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them. Suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened and everyone's chains were loosed. And the keeper of the prison, awaking from sleep and seeing the prison doors open, supposing the prisoners had fled, drew his sword and was about

to kill himself. But Paul called with a loud voice, saying, "Do yourself no harm, for we are all here." Then he called for a light, ran in, and fell down trembling before Paul and Silas. And he brought them out and said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" So, they said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household." Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night and washed their stripes. And immediately he and all his family were baptized. Now when he had brought them into his house, he set food before them; and he rejoiced, having believed in God with all his household.

GOSPEL: John 9:1-38

At that time, as Jesus passed by, He saw a man who was blind from birth. And His disciples asked Him, saying, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" Jesus answered, "Neither this man nor his parents sinned, but that the works of God should be revealed in him. I must work the works of Him who sent Me while it is day; the night is coming when no one can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." When He had said these things, He spat on the ground and made clay with the saliva; and He anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay. And He said to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which is translated, Sent). So, he went and washed, and came back seeing. Therefore, the neighbors and those who previously had seen that he was blind said, "Is not this he who sat and begged?" Some said, "This is he." Others said, "He is like him." He said, "I am he." Therefore, they said to him, "How were your eyes opened?" He answered and said, "A Man called Jesus made clay and anointed my eyes and said to me, 'Go to the pool of Siloam and wash.' So, I went and washed, and I received sight." Then they said to him, "Where is He?" He said, "I do not know." They brought him who formerly was blind to the Pharisees. Now it was a Sabbath when Jesus made the clay and opened his eyes. Then the Pharisees also asked him again how he had received his sight. He said to them, "He put clay on my eyes, and I washed, and I see." Therefore, some of the Pharisees said, "This Man is not from God, because He does not keep the Sabbath." Others said, "How can a man who is a sinner do such signs?" And there was a division among them. They said to the blind man again, "What do you say about Him because He opened your eyes?" He said, "He is a prophet." But the Jews did not believe concerning him, that he had been blind and received his sight, until they called the parents of him who had received his sight. And they asked them, saying, "Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?" His parents answered them and said, "We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; but by what means he now sees we do not know, or who opened his eyes we do not know. He is of age; ask him. He will speak for himself." His parents said these things because they feared the Jews, for the Jews had agreed already that if anyone confessed that He was Christ, he would be put out of the synagogue. Therefore, his parents said, "He is of age; ask him." So, they again called the man who was blind, and said to him, "Give God the glory! We know that this Man is a sinner." He answered and said, "Whether He is a sinner or not I do not know. One thing I know: that though I was blind, now I see." Then they said to him again, "What did He do to you? How did He open your eyes?" He answered them, "I told you already, and you did not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become His disciples?" Then they reviled him and said, "You are His disciple, but we are Moses' disciples. We know that God spoke to Moses; as for this fellow, we do not know where

He is from.” The man answered and said to them, “Why, this is a marvelous thing, that you do not know where He is from; yet He has opened my eyes! Now we know that God does not hear sinners; but if anyone is a worshiper of God and does His will, He hears him. Since the world began it has been unheard of that anyone opened the eyes of one who was born blind. If this Man were not from God, He could do nothing.” They answered and said to him, “You were completely born in sins, and are you teaching us?” And they cast him out. Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when He had found him, He said to him, “Do you believe in the Son of God?” He answered and said, “Who is He, Lord, that I may believe in Him?” And Jesus said to him, “You have both seen Him and it is He who is talking with you.” Then he said, “Lord, I believe!” And he worshiped Him.

LITURGICAL SCHEDULE FOR THE WEEK

MON. June 10	Hieromartyr Timothy, Bishop of Prusa; Acts 17:1-15, Jn 11:47-57
TUE. June 11	Holy Apostles Bartholomew and Barnabas; Acts 17:19-28, Jn 12:19-36
WED. June 12	Leavetaking of Pascha, Venerable Onuphrius the Great; Acts 18:22-28, Jn 12:36-47
6:00 PM	VESPERS
THU. June 13	ASCENSION OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST ; Acts 1:1-12, Lk 24:36-53
9:30 AM	DIVINE LITURGY
FRI. June 14	Prophet Elisha; Acts 19:1-8, Jn 14:1-11
SAT. June 15	Prophet Amos; Acts 20:7-12, Jn 14:10-21
4:00 PM	VESPERS
SUN. June 16	7th SUNDAY AFTER PASCHA, FATHERS OF THE 1ST ECUMENICAL COUNCIL, Father’s Day, Tone 6
9:10 AM	HOURS
9:30 AM	DIVINE LITURGY Followed by Coffee Hour



FOR YOUR PRAYERS

Debby Pinta, P. O. Box 39, Middle Bass, OH 43446; **Tony Monastra**, 2119 Willow Cove Marblehead, OH 43440; **Patti Owens**, 311 Woodbridge Road, Vermilion, OH 44089; **Basil Glovinsky**, 1007 Glendale Drive, Port Clinton, OH 43452; **Subdeacon Roger Pinta**, P.O. Box 39, Middle Bass, OH 43446; **Diane Tryon**, 109 Joslyn Street, Arcadia, OH 44804; **Ed & Irene Vangeloff**, 454 Strouse Lane, Sandusky, OH 44870



JUNE REPOSED

Mike Mazur (1923) No date provided; Anna Mazur (1923) No date provided; **4-** Alex Sennich (1994); **4-** Victoria Guzy (1965); **6-** Matthew Gould (2020); **8-** Mary Hunt (2003); **9-** Cristina Rindfleisch (2006); **9-** Charles Hagmaier (2018); **16-** Verona Pich (2010); **17-** Archimandrite Luke Sirkun (1956) Former Pastor; **17-** Mitered Archpriest John Gratson (1965) Former Pastor; **20-** Jean Frances Glovinsky (2016); **20-** Dan Karens Cousin 2019; **21-** Mary Elchisco Migala

(1983); **22-** Archpriest Kyrill Hartman (2010) Former Pastor; **23-** Ruth Benya (1995); **26-** George Millie (1974); **27-** Anna Ignatenko- (1969); **29-** Stephen Millie (1988)



JUNE CANDLE SPONSORS

Altar Candles: Fr. Peter & Mat. Michelle, For Health and God's Blessings for Barbara Wroblewski, Matushka's mother and Michal Tomáš, Father's father (**\$50**); **Chandelier:** Diane Tryon, In Loving Memory of Uncle Tig (**\$50**); **Eternal Light & Icon Screen:** Fr. Peter & Mat. Michelle, For God's Blessings for Archpriest Ján Čižmár and the parishioners of St. Theodosius Cathedral (**\$25**); **Candles at the Cross:** Laura Kovach, Birthday blessings to Stephanie and in memory of John Kovach (**\$20**); **Candles at St. Tikhon Icon:** For Safety and Health of Nicholas, Tikhon, Gleice, Sophie & Chloe (**\$20**)



VIGILS FOR June 2

Angela Bricker 4 For family, parents, Aunt Dorothy, and cousin Vincent

Susan Guzy 1 Health of Alfred, Pam & Gary

Laura Kovach 3 For health and/or healing of Debby P., David M., Patti O., Margi H., Jim K., Ron R., Diane T., Ruth S., James W., Tony M., Hannah S., Barbara D., Pauline O., Betty K., Mark M., Dana M., Bodhi C., Sharon D., John D., Karen D., and Kathie J.
Birthday blessings and many years to Jake M.
Safe travels for family.

Dennis Lapso 1 For the blessed repose of Annette Mary, Health and Blessings of Matushka Theodora Ressetar

Sandy Martin 2 God's Blessing for his 50th Anniversary of his ordination to Fr. John, Special intentions

Natalie Twarek 8 God's Blessing to Fr John on his 50th anniversary to the priesthood! In loving memory of mom and dad on their anniversary 6/4, Safe travel for Laura & Jim, Health and recovery of Debbie Pinta, For the health and recovery of Kayla, Bill Byrnes, Ruth, Pam, Diane, Ron, Jim, Michelle, Terrie, Theresa, Clayton, Father Emilian, For the health of Matushka Melania, Randy, Patrick and Marty, Mike Heffernan and Barbara Heffernan, Health and healing for Father's dad Michal and Matushka's mom Barbara, For the health and recovery of Tony, Bev, Ed, Irene, Father David, Pauline, Judy, Tina, Carole, Gary, Sharon, Tina's dad, Earl, Sonya, Margi & Joe, Betty, Jackie, MaryAnn & Bob, Bodhi, Stella, Jake, Pat

PRAYER LIST

Parishioners & Family: Tom Hileman / Pam / Jim Twarek / Ed Garrity / Patti Owens / Tony Monastra / Barbara Wroblewski / Michal Tomáš / Ruth Sheller / Basil Glovinsky / Dale / Sophie / Jeanne Smith / Carol / David Martin / Fred Soski / Chris Hannon / Subdeacon Roger Pinta / Ed Vangeloff / Irene Vangeloff / Diane Tryon / Sonja Rose / Ron Royhab / James Bargdill / John Beadle / Carole Conaway / Gary Conaway / Sharon Dietrich / Michael Glovinsky / Shirley Gresh / Joseph Habegger / Elaine Hileman / Betty Kovach / Child Stella Miller / William Pipenur / Earl Rindfleisch / Helen Jean Rofkar / George Royhab / Marianne Royhab / Stephanie Royhab / Kathy Jacob / the child Bodhi Cassell / Clifford / Gleice, Sophie & Chloe / Carol / Debbie & Marco / Nora.

Other Requests: Amy / Bill Byrnes / Michael Heffernan / Susanne / Barbara Heffernan / Rita Mumea / Charles Schlett / Kathy Debevits / Maxwell Chaney / Sidharth Bijilani – friend of Subdeacon Roger and Debbie Pinta / Anthony / Archpriest Ján Čižmár / Archpriest David Lis / Archpriest Emilian & Matushka Laryssa Hutnyan / Donald Gresh / Mark Ludvik / Robert Piznar / Mark Masica / Valerie Ritzenthaler / William / Rick Rowe / Chris.

Military: Craig Cassell / Jake Ellithorpe / Jordon Fulton / Justin Issler / Tikhon / Nicholas / & All Military



JUNE BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

19 – Ryan Stamp; **25** – Fr. Peter; **26** – Jim & Laura Kovach Anniversary (48)



READERS LIST

Sunday Jun 9 – Ron
Sunday Jun 16 – Joe
Sunday Jun 23 – Natalie
Sunday Jun 30 – Jake



ATTENDANCE

06/01 Vespers, **8** attending (1 guest); **06/02** Divine Liturgy, **39** attending (13 guests)



COFFEE HOUR SPONSOR LIST

June 9 – Natalia
June 16 – Sandy
June 23 – Tina
June 30 – Natalia
July 7 – Jake
July 14 – Available
July 21 – Tina

Please sign up to host coffee hour after the Sunday Divine Liturgy. Signup sheet is located in the Social Hall.



SUNDAY OFFERING

Sunday, June 2, 2024

Tithe	\$1,287.00
Candles	\$ 74.00
Vigils	\$ 70.00
Anonymous Donations	\$ 500.00
Donations	\$ 410.00
Holy Day Donation	\$ 200.00
St. Tikhon Seminary (June)	\$ 100.00
Total:	\$2,641.00

May the Lord reward you for your financial and spiritual support!



CHARITY OF THE MONTH

“St. Tikhon Seminary” is the charity we donate to for the month of May.



CLEANING SCHEDULE

June 3, Angela
June 10, Angela
June 17, Angela
June 24, Angela



NEW ALTAR SERVER

We are very happy to welcome in our Church a new Altar boy SEBASTIAN STAMP who was installed and served in the Holy Altar for the first time today. May Our Lord and God bless him and give him strength in his very important service to the Lord and His Church!

UP-COMING EVENTS IN OUR PARISH – MARK YOUR CALENDARS!



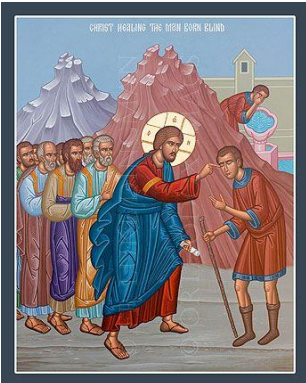
- June 10th** Cleaning Onions 8:00 AM (*Monday*)
- Jun 13th** Ascension of Our Lord (*Thursday*)
- June 17th** Baking Day 8:00 AM (*Monday*)
- June 18th** Baking Day 8:00 AM (*Tuesday*)
- Jun 22nd** 5th Memorial Saturday, Market Day (*Saturday*)
- Jun 23rd** PENTECOST
- June 24th** Baking Day 8:00 AM (*Monday*)
- June 25th** Baking Day 8:00 AM (*Tuesday*)



MARKET DAY!

Our sincere thanks are extended to the following parishioners who helped with our Market Day yesterday, June 8th: Tina, Natalie, Laura, Cliff, Kathy, Greg, Ryan, Sebastian, Natalia, Mimi, Jean, Susan, Tim, Roddie, David, Fr. Peter, and Mat. Michelle. The gross income from the sale was **\$2,455.79**. May Our Lord reward you all for your time and energy with good health, peace, and happiness for Many Happy and Blessed Years!

Our next Market Day will take place on Saturday, June 22nd starting with set up at 8:00 AM. We will have perohi, kielbasa and kraut, spanakopita, and a large variety of baked goods. Your help is greatly appreciated!



Sunday of the Blind Man

Commemorated on June 9

At the end of Chapter 8 in Gospel of Saint John, the Savior was disputing with the Pharisees in the Temple during the Feast of Tabernacles. He told them, "Your father Abraham was glad that he should see my day; and he saw it and rejoiced" (John 8:56). The Jews said that Jesus was not even fifty years old, so how could He claim to have seen Abraham? The Lord replied, "Before Abraham was, I am." I am, of course, is the name that God revealed to Moses in the Burning Bush. When the Jews picked up stones to throw at Him, He hid Himself and went out of the Temple.

We read in Saint John's Gospel (9:1-38): "As He passed by, he saw a man who was blind from birth." It might appear that Jesus was on His way to something or someone else, but in his Commentary on the Gospel of Saint John, the ever-memorable Archbishop Dmitri of Dallas, quotes from Homily LVI of Saint John Chrysostom: "that on going out of the Temple, He proceeded intentionally to the work, is clear from this: it was He who saw the blind man, and not the blind man who came to Him...."

Christ's disciples asked Him who had sinned, the blind man or his parents that he had been born blind. Jesus answered, "Neither this man nor his parents sinned, but that the works of God might be manifested in him" (John 9:3). It was thought that a person who had some affliction must have sinned

(or his parents did) to deserve such punishment. In the Book of Exodus (20:5), God said that he would visit "the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation." This, however, applied to the sin of idolatry, if the children emulated their parents' behavior.

The blind man was not born blind just so the miracle could be performed, but seeing the man in such a condition, the Lord decided to use him in a way that would manifest God's glory. He Who is the Light of the world healed the blind man and enlightened him. Giving sight to the blind was one of the signs which would identify the Messiah (Matthew 11:4-6).

The Lord made clay when He spat on the ground, and placed it in the man's empty eye sockets and sent him to the pool of Siloam to wash. Most versions of the Gospels translate the word *επεθηκεν* as "anointed," but it can also mean "to spread on," or "to smear." Siloam means "sent," and in Saint John's Gospel Christ says about forty times that He Himself had been sent by the Father."

This manner of healing reminds us of the way God created man by fashioning him from the dust of the earth. In the Old Testament God created man from the dust of the earth, now Christ, the same God, fashions eyes from the clay and places them in the blind man's empty sockets. Here are some quotes from the Pentecostarion:

At the Oikos of Matins: "He receives physical eyes as well as those of the soul."

In the Verses of the Synaxarion: O Bestower of light. Who are Light coming forth from Light; You gave eyes to the man who was blind from birth, O Word."

In the second exapostilarion: "Along the way, the Savior found a man who lacked both sight and eyes." At Monday Vespers (stikheron of the Feast) we sing, "With his whole soul, and mind, and his tongue, the man who in times not long passed had been blind, confessed Him Who had fashioned eyes for him out of spittle and clay..."

Saint Theophylaktos says in his Commentary that "Jesus our Lord fashioned all the members of the blind man's body except for the eyes, which He omitted. By healing them now, he completes the divine act of creating and demonstrates that He is the Creator."

Jesus tests the faith of the blind man by sending him to the Pool of Siloam (which means "sent"). He respects the man's freedom, but asks for his voluntary and free participation in the miracle. The blind man, with faith, obeys God's command. He goes and washes in the pool, and he returns seeing.

The former blind man's life was not made easier, however. He becomes the object of the Scribes' and Pharisees' evil and hatred, those who believed in God and in the observance of His Law. They themselves were blind, yet they were suspicious of the formerly blind man, imagining that he only pretended to be blind and now was able to see. "They willingly were made blind by the dark letter of the Law, in which Christ, the resplendent Sun shines."¹

They questioned the man who was blind, but when they see the miracle before their eyes, instead of believing, they shut the eyes of their souls. Then the man's parents were questioned. They were afraid to confirm the miracle that happened to their son who was born blind, because they did not want to be expelled from the synagogue. They tried to avoid trouble by concealing the truth. Therefore, they said, "He is of age, ask him!"

We who receive benefits from God every day are ashamed or afraid to confess God because of our lack of trust. We put our own interests above God, knowing that He will understand us! He will understand us, but He will also see our faith and what priorities we have in our lives. Christ will see what "gods" we have put in His place, but He will not cease to remind us that He is the light of the world.

The blind man was healed, not only in the eyes of his body but eventually in his soul as well. He recognizes Jesus as God, and does not hesitate to confess it before the religious rulers with courage that

many of us would envy. Faith alone is not enough; we also need to confess our faith in order to become genuine children of God. When we confess Christ before men, He will confess us before His Father, as the Lord has promised us: "Everyone who shall confess me before men, I also shall confess him before my Father who is in Heaven; and whoever denies me before men I also will deny him before my Father who is in Heaven" (Matthew 10:32).

3M's Corner



Christ is Risen! Christos Voskrese!

My dearest friends and brothers and sisters at Holy Assumption,

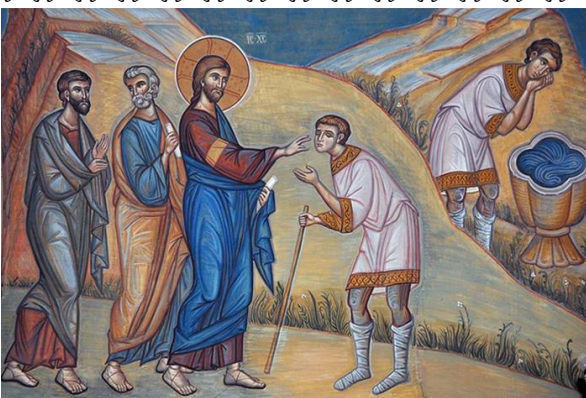
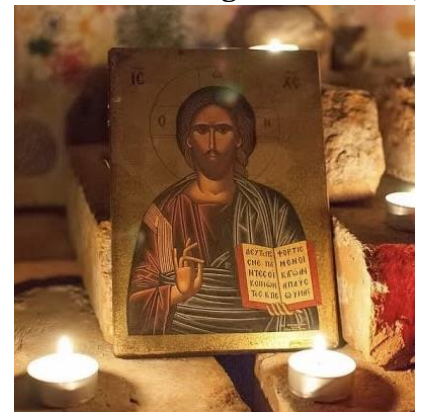
During our travels, I'm always inspired by, what I like to call, 'God's Light'. Sometimes Father and I have deep conversations during these drives. Conversations about beloved family, our son, or parents, sometimes about you all, our church family, or dear friends that are ill or in need. Then I look up, and see the 'God's Light'. The beauty of radiating light coming from the heavens, puts me in awe and fills me with love, hope and the knowledge that God is present with us and He hears our prayers.

We, as Orthodox Christians, use Light in many different ways to illumine our spaces of worship. By use of candles, vigils, chandeliers, O Gladsome Light, even gold which illumines light!

I remember one of our very first Liturgies here at Holy Assumption, and the stained-glass window, shining from the East, lit up Father Peter as he was preaching a beautiful sermon. It was a wondrous moment to see God's Light shine at that moment.

As Orthodox Christians, the presence of Light is a sign of our faith and hope in Him. He is the Light "that shines in the darkness," (John 1:5) We can offer our prayer when we light a candle, see a beautiful sunrise or sunset, or see 'God's Light', knowing that God will hear all those who turn to Him and His Holy Saints in prayer.

Let us all be His Lights that shine through us so that others may come to know Him through us.



Would You Rather Be Blind?

by Fr. James Guirguis

The Reading from the Holy Gospel according to St. John 9:1-38

If you were given the choice between having your physical sight or having your spiritual sight, which would you choose? Imagine if you could only have one or the other. Another way to look at it is, which is more preferable, to be physically blind or spiritually blind.

We take our 5 senses seriously and perhaps it's true that we don't take any one sense more seriously than the sense of sight. Physical sight allows us to perceive and examine the world around us. It would be quite difficult to imagine life without our eyes. But we don't often think about our spiritual sense of

sight. We rarely if ever think that there is such a thing as spiritual blindness. Our society has become so “tolerant” and “accepting” of so much that it is hard for us to fathom that in fact there is such a thing as blindness that is not physical.

We know this is true because we see it in today’s gospel passage. This story is remarkable not only because it deals with a man born physically blind, who miraculously receives his sight. Rather the real magnificence of this passage is that it clearly deals with the spiritual blindness of the Pharisees and leaders of the Jewish people, the people who were supposed to know God. Surely these men would recognize the work of God when they saw it! Surely, they would bow to their knees and honor the one capable of such great miracles. Surely, they would recognize that all of their hopes and dreams in a Messiah would be fulfilled in this Jesus of Nazareth.

But we notice that a funny, rather, a tragic thing happened. They could not see the Lord Jesus for who He was. They refused to see Him as He was. Rather they preferred to see Him through their sinful ways. Why did they not recognize Him? Because they chose to trust in themselves and in their own righteousness and not in the Lord. In our own society this is what has happened with Jesus. We are told that growing numbers of people do not go to church and by the way, if you choose to stay home most Sundays, you are part of the growing problem in this country. If the exercise of your faith is optional and casual, it is likely that your children will not exercise faith at all.

In our day and age, everyone you meet has an opinion on Jesus Christ. But our opinions on the Lord are tainted. They are deeply affected by whether or not we are trying to live lives of holiness and purity. Our opinions are also affected by whether we are prepared to be corrected by others. When I meet people who leave Christianity to study Hinduism or Buddhism or Islam or atheism, I often see people who refuse to be corrected, who refuse to be accountable, who refuse to be taught by Christ. I see people who would rather change who they worship than change who they are and how they behave. Being a faithful Christian is harder and more demanding because Christ demands more than formal religious practices. He demands my heart.

This is what I see in the example of the Pharisees in this passage. No matter what they see. No matter how many questions they ask. No matter whether they hear personal testimony. No matter whether they question direct witnesses to the miraculous events. Nothing will change their perception of Jesus Christ. In the Psalms it is written “With the pure, You show yourself pure, but with the perverse, you appear to be perverse” (Psalm 18:26). It is because the Pharisees were impure, that Christ appeared impure to them. And it was ultimately because the blind man was pure, that he truly recognized Christ as the pure one, the Messiah. What are my thoughts about Jesus? What do my thoughts about Jesus actually say about me?

Another point in today’s reading is how we look at the difficulties or tragedies of life. The disciples saw the tragedy of a man born blind and they wanted to know only one thing; “Who is to blame?” “This man was born blind. Who is to blame, his parents or him?” Yet the Lord offers us another way, a better way to deal with tragedy and the difficulties of life. In essence He tells His disciples “Don’t try to blame anyone for the bad thing that has happened, instead recognize this as a chance to witness God’s work.” And this is really true. Would we recognize and give glory to God if life was always smooth sailing? I don’t think so. But when things become difficult, when life becomes too much to bear, when we are forced into a certain amount of desperation, we find that God often provides a way and He prepares our hearts to receive it.

We spend so much time blaming others when things go wrong. The Lord wants us to rise above that level. He wants us to see that whatever difficulties arise, whatever tragedies and circumstances may come our way, He has allowed it and He can resolve it in due time.

In the history of the world there had never been a man born without eyes who was miraculously healed! God did the impossible because He can create out of nothing. And if the Lord can create out of

nothing, He most certainly can create out of something, even if that something seems like a terrible thing. This is the way of the God of love. The God who does not blame us. The God who does not condemn us. The God who goes out of His way to provide healing because He was merciful to the blind man and He is merciful to us. Tragedies happen because the world is fallen. Our Lord Jesus Christ heals and restores because He has overcome everything difficult in life, even Death itself.

May we have faith in this merciful God and His only begotten Son and may we be granted healing of our own blindness and rejoice with this blind man "I once was blind, but now I see!" And glory be to God Forever AMEN.