



**ST. RAYMOND DE PEÑAFORT**

**Lent** March 19, 2023  
**Reflections**

*Sr. Val*

Dear Friends,

Today we begin the fourth week of Lent-- already!! How has this time of deeper prayer, fasting, and almsgiving been going for you? Now that we're in the mid-days of this holy season has the resolution with which you began on Ash Wednesday begun to fade a bit? Is it getting more difficult to remain faithful to the practices you were determined to see through to Easter? If that is so, you're not alone! Perhaps this fourth week of Lent can be a time to recommit to prayer, to fasting from those things that diminish your spirit, and to reflect upon and see again the unique and wonderful ways God is present in your life.

In today's gospel, we hear the amazing account of Jesus' meeting with the man born blind. We don't know much about him other than he's suffered with this infirmity his whole life. He's never seen his own face or that of his parents. He's never had the joy of experiencing light, color, and beauty. He's simply a beggar that people passed by day after day, judging him to be a sinner who didn't matter and who disappeared in the shadows of others' self-righteousness. But in Jesus' mercy, he becomes a proclaimer of the light; his physical blindness becomes the vehicle for seeing rightly. This poor unnoticed blind beggar sees and recognizes the grace and healing presence of Jesus and has the courage to speak the truth of Jesus, regardless of the consequences, to those who do not want to see. And the consequences were harsh. When he's brought to the Pharisees, who are not open to the light and grace of this moment, he's expelled from the synagogue for remaining steadfast in his story of healing by Jesus. Afraid of the Pharisees, even his parents choose not to support him or rejoice in gratitude for his newly given sight.



**Are we, in our own everyday busy lives, in need of  
grace and light to see rightly?**

**Are we in need of Jesus' touch to heal our blindness?**

During this Lenten Season, can we reflect on how we look upon the homeless, the poor, or the immigrant yearning for freedom and safety? Maybe our lack of sight is much closer to home. Perhaps we need to have light shed on our troubled family relationships in need of reconciliation and healing. Maybe we need to have greater clarity in forgiving ourselves for our mistakes in order to move forward in new light and understanding. Perhaps we need to reflect more deeply on how God is present and active in our lives every day, walking with us, holding us up when we are troubled, rejoicing with us in our joy, and comforting us in our sorrow. Like the man born blind, how can each of us be transformed to become a fearless proclaimer of the light, mercy, healing, and grace that is available to everyone?

As we continue our Lenten journey, may we be open and receptive to the light that will help us to see rightly. May we welcome the grace to see ourselves as loved by God without measure.

May Lent 2023 be a time of new light, new hope, and new life for all of us.

*Sr. Val*

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