

“I was blind, now I see.”

John 9:25

Sight, Insight, and Interacting with the Spiritually Blind

6th Sunday of the Holy Great Fast

A Unique Miracle

- “Since the world began it has been unheard of that anyone opened the eyes of one who was born blind.” (John 9:32)





Sight, Insight, and Spiritual Blindness

- A man may be physically blind and see everything that matters
- St. Didymus
- Rufinus on St. Didymus: *“He was deprived of his eyesight ... but he was inflamed with an even greater desire for the sight of the true light....he prayed to the Lord unceasingly not that he might receive sight in his physical eyes, but the illumination of the heart.”* (Rufinus)
- *“Do not be troubled, Didymus, because you are deemed deprived of your physical eyes, for what you lack are those eyes which mice, flies, and lizards have; rejoice rather that you have the eyes which angels have, by which God is seen, and through which a great light of knowledge is being kindled for you.”* (St. Anthony to St. Didymus, An anecdote has been preserved by Jerome and Rufinus)



Sight, Insight, and Spiritual Blindness

- A man may have perfect sight and understand nothing
 - In Sin
 - *“But if some, willfully closing the eyes of their mind, would not receive the rays of that Light, their darkness arises not from the nature of the Light, but from their own wickedness, who willfully deprive themselves of the gift.”* (St. John Chrysostom, Homily 8 on the Gospel of John)
 - In Relationships
 - In Faith
- Blindness Is a Condition of the Heart
- St. Paul
 - **“And immediately there fell from his eyes something like scales, and he received his sight at once; and he arose and was baptized.”** (Acts 9:18)



The Drama

- **Setting the Stage – John 8**
- The woman caught in adultery
- **“Jesus said to them, ‘Most assuredly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM.’”** (John 8:58)
- **The Pivot**
- **“Then Jesus hid Himself and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by.”** (John 8:59)
- **“As He passed by, He saw a man who was blind from birth.”** (John 9:1)

The Drama

- **The Resolution**
- **“For judgment I have come into this world, that those who do not see may see, and that those who see may be made blind.” (John 9:39)**
- **“If you were blind, you would have no sin; but now you say, ‘We see.’ Therefore your sin remains.” (John 9:41)**

How are we to interact with
one who is blind?

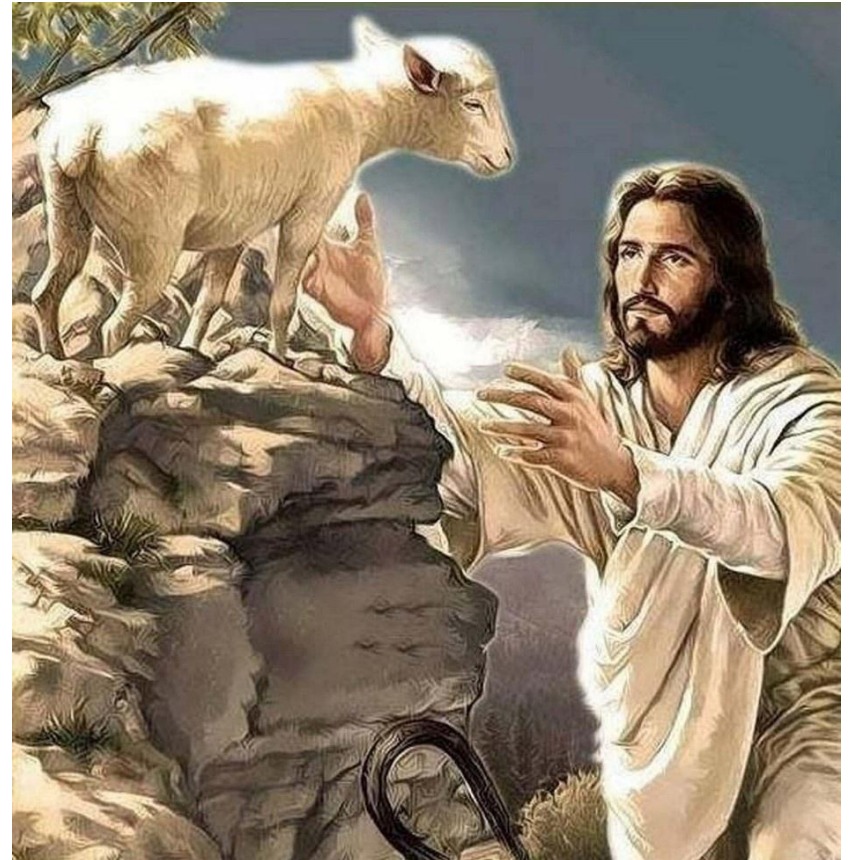
1. Reject Judgment and Blame

- **“Neither this man nor his parents sinned, but that the works of God should be revealed in him.”** (John 9:3)
- EX: Story of St. Macarius and the sinful monk



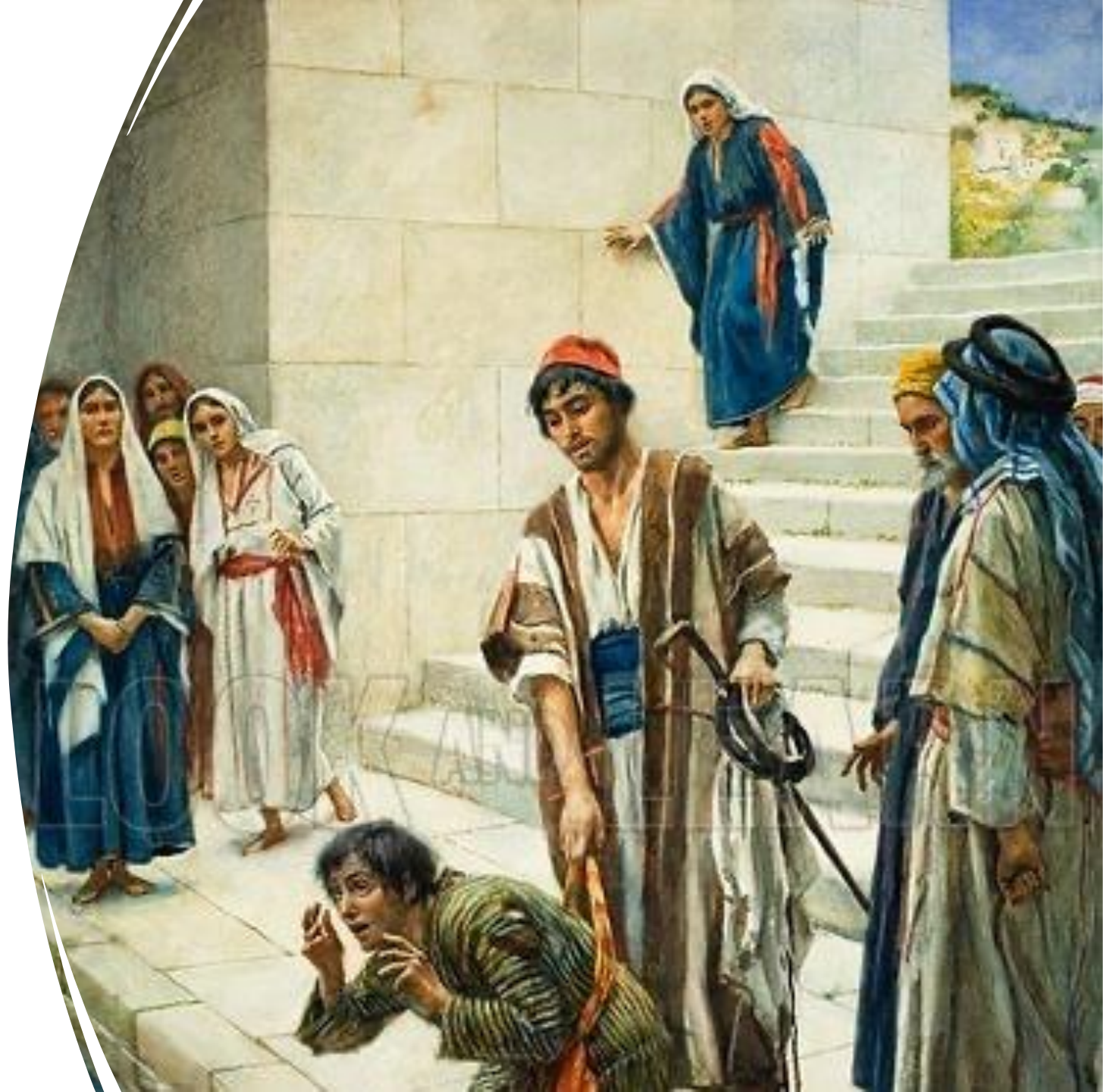
2. Adopt a Fatherly Spirit

- **“I must work the works of Him who sent Me while it is day; the night is coming when no one can work.”** (John 9:4)
- EX: The Good Shepherd
- **“The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep. But a hireling, he who is not the shepherd, one who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees... because he is a hireling and does not care about the sheep.”** (John 10:11–13)
- *“In this the shepherd differs from the hireling; the one always looks to his own safety, caring not for the sheep; the other always seeks that of the sheep, neglecting his own.”* (St. John Chrysostom, Homily 60 on the Gospel of John)



3. Lead Them to Grace

- “Go, wash in the pool of Siloam” (which is translated, Sent). (John 9:7)



Conclusion

- How are we to interact with one who is blind?
 - Reject Judgment and Blame
 - Adopt a Fatherly Spirit
 - Lead Them to Grace
- Am I blind?
- **“Examine me, O Lord, and prove me; try my mind and my heart. For Your loving-kindness is before my eyes, And I have walked in Your truth.” (Ps. 26:2-3)**