

**Homily for 4th Sunday of Lent Year A, March 22nd, 2020 at Laurel, MS for Private Mass.**

**Readings: 1Samuel 16:1b.6-7,10-13a, Ephesians 5:8-14, John 9:1-41**

**Theme: Let us be joyful in God's Light despite darkness around us.**

**By Fr Emmanuel Subaar**

## **Introduction**

Brothers and sisters, we have now crossed halfway through Lent with today being the 4th Sunday of Lent. Today is "Laetare" Sunday which means "Rejoicing" Sunday which calls us to be joyful for God's gratuitous gifts. We are called to be relaxed and free ourselves from worries and distress.

At this period in our lives everything seems to be darkness and fear around us, but "Laetare" Sunday encourages us to have faith and hope that very soon the storms will calm. It also calls to mind the words of St. Teresa of Avila, "Don't let anything trouble you, everything is passing away except God." No condition is permanent in this world, but our joy and hope are in the Lord.

Our readings today remind us that Jesus our Shepherd is the light who brightens our darkness and heals our blindness. In our first reading, Samuel anointed David, the youngest of the seven sons of Jesse, as king because he had the inner qualities that would make him a servant-leader of God's people. "The Lord does not see as mortals see, human beings look on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart."

Samuel made the mistake of judging Eliab, the oldest son of Jesse as the one anointed by the Lord because of his physical appearance. True worshippers do not only look at the outward appearance, but they are those who worship God from the heart. They keep their faith pure within their hearts so they can worship God from the heart. So, if we have received the light of Christ, we must not judge things through human eyes.

St. Paul in our second reading contrasts our past life to our new life as Christians, by using the images of light and darkness. He says, “Once you were darkness, but now in the Lord you are light. Live as children of light-.” We live as children of light if we look beyond appearances to helping the helpless, the poor and underprivileged who will also see the light through our assistance.

In our gospel of today, Jesus heals a man born blind which shows He cares for the sick, the weak and the marginalised in society. The healed man believed in Jesus and did not allow the questionings of the Scribes and Pharisees to intimidate him. He was later expelled from the Synagogue as a result of his faith in Jesus. This makes St. John Chrysostom’s statement true to us today, that “the Pharisees cast him out of the Temple: but the Lord of the Temple found him.”

Brothers and sisters, we may be surrounded by all sort of difficulties, but we must be convinced in our faith that Jesus our Light is with us to heal us. Like Jesus instructed the blind man: “Go wash in the pool of Siloam.”, he also instructs us to

have faith in him and not deny him. The good news is that it is Christ who heals all our spiritual blindness. Let us trust him as our Divine Shepherd as in the Responsorial Psalm today, “The Lord is my Shepherd, there is nothing I shall want.” May Jesus be our true Shepherd and fill our hearts with peace and joy amidst our current circumstances.