**4th SUNDAY OF LENT [30th March, 2014]**

READINGS: 1 Sam. 16:1, 6-7, 10-13 / Eph. 5:8-14 / John 9:1-41

THEME: JESUS, THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD

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INTRODUCTION

In the Gospel according to St. John, the miracles of Jesus are presented as signs intended to lead His audience to understand certain deeper truths of salvation. For example, Jesus multiplied loaves to feed the five thousand people, and it was meant as a sign to understand the deeper truth that Jesus is the ‘Bread of Life’ (Jn. 6:51). Similarly in today’s gospel reading, Jesus opened the eyes of the blind man, so that we would understand that He is the ‘Light of the World’ (Jn. 9:5). Let us pick five lessons from the fact that Jesus is the Light of the World.

1. JESUS ENLIGHTENS THE WORLD UNTO SALVATION:

As a light brought into a dark place makes us see better, so Jesus enlightens us and the whole world unto salvation. For this reason, in the gospel reading, Jesus gave not only physical sight to the blind man, but He gave him the spiritual light of faith as well. The man eventually came to believe in Jesus as the Messiah. We should, therefore, thank God that we have accepted Jesus the **only true and permanent Light of salvation.**

Jesus also enlightens us by clearing our darkness or ignorance about the works of God; thus, in the gospel reading Jesus enlightened His disciples who were ignorant of the cause of the blindness of the man born blind.

1. JESUS GUIDES MANKIND ALONG THE PATH TO HEAVEN:

As with a light, we can see our way clearly to our destination, so only JESUS guides mankind along the path to heaven, for He is THE WAY, THE TRUTH AND THE LIGHT (Jn. 14:6). Again, let us thank God that we have accepted Jesus, who is not only the WAY but also the LIGHT on the WAY to heaven! How secure and safe is our journey to heaven if we follow Jesus!

1. JESUS GIVES JOY TO THE WORLD:

We all know how much joy light gives us after a period of darkness, especially if we desire to watch our favourite TV programme. Jesus is the true LIGHT that gives everlasting joy to us and the whole world. That is why even at His birth, the angel announced to the shepherds at night: ‘Don’t be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of GREAT JOY for the whole WORLD. For this day…’ (Lk. 2:10-11). Therefore, it is in Jesus that we should find our absolute and everlasting joy!

1. JESUS IS A WARNING LIGHT TO THE WORLD:

As red lights in the traffic light system and factories warn us of dangers ahead, so Jesus, though our joy, also warns us against those things which may take our joy away. For instance, He warns us against remaining in sin. Thus, in Mt. 11:20-24, He warned the people of the cities of Chorazin, Bethsaida and Capernaum for not repenting when they heard his word: “Woe to you Chorazin! Woe to you Bethsaida! And judgment on Capernaum will be harsher than on Sodom!” Beloved, let us therefore repent, so that we would not be like those who are close to the Hydroelectric Dam but have no lights.

1. JESUS MUST BE KNOWN TO THE WHOLE WORLD

Jesus says: “No one lights a lamp and covers it; instead it is put on a lamp-stand, where it gives light to everyone in the house” (Mt. 5:15). Similarly, you and I have the duty to proclaim to others that Jesus is the Light of the world. He has to be known and accepted by many more through our witnessing in good words and deeds.

Finally, I pray that the light of Jesus may shine through our good deeds and words, so that people will give glory and praise to our Father in heaven (Mt. 5:16)! Amen!