

## **Homily Summary – 4th Sunday of Lent (Year A)**

**Short Overview:** This Sunday, known as Laetare Sunday, invites us to rejoice as we reach the halfway point of Lent. The rose vestments signal hope and encouragement as we continue our Lenten journey. Through the Gospel of the man born blind, the Church reminds us that Christ is the light who helps us truly see. Like physical exercise strengthens the body, our Lenten efforts - though sometimes difficult - strengthen our souls and draw us closer to God. This is a time to examine our progress, renew our commitment, and seek healing through the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

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### **Main Points**

#### **1. Laetare Sunday: A Moment of Joy and Encouragement**

“Laetare” means “rejoice.” Even in the penitential season of Lent, the Church gives us a pause to rejoice in God’s mercy and the nearness of Easter.

The rose color symbolizes hope, reminding us that our sacrifices are leading somewhere beautiful.

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#### **2. The “No Pain, No Gain” of the Spiritual Life**

Just as physical exercise can be challenging but leads to greater health and strength, so too our Lenten practices can feel difficult but bring spiritual growth.

Prayer, fasting, and almsgiving stretch us - but they also make us stronger, freer, and more joyful.

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#### **3. Lent as a Midpoint Check-In**

This Sunday is an opportunity to reflect:

- How am I doing with my Lenten resolutions?
- Have I grown closer to God?
- Do I need to renew my effort?

Lent is not about perfection, but perseverance.

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#### **4. From Blindness to Sight: The Gospel Message**

In the Gospel (John 9), Jesus heals the man born blind.

This miracle is not just physical - it is spiritual.

The man comes to see who Jesus truly is, while others remain spiritually blind.

We are all called to let Jesus open our eyes:

- To see our sins clearly
  - To recognize God’s presence
  - To follow Christ more faithfully
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#### **5. The Scrutinies: Examining the Heart**

The Scrutinies, celebrated during Lent for those preparing for Baptism, invite a deep “searching” of the heart.

But this is not only for catechumens - it is for all of us.

We are called to examine where we need healing, conversion, and growth.

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#### **6. The Gift of Reconciliation**

The Sacrament of Reconciliation is one of the most powerful ways Jesus restores our spiritual sight.

Through Confession:

- We receive mercy
  - We are healed
  - We are strengthened to live more faithfully
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#### **7. St. Patrick: A Model of Faith**

As we approach the feast of Saint Patrick, we are reminded to celebrate not just culturally, but spiritually - by deepening our faith and sharing it with others, just as he did.

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#### **Key Bible Verses:**

- **John 9:25** – “I was blind, now I see.”
- **Ephesians 5:8** – “Once you were darkness, but now in the Lord you are light.”

- **Psalm 23:1** – “The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.”
- **1 Samuel 16:7** – “The Lord looks on the heart.”

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### Reflection Questions

1. Where might I be spiritually “blind” in my life right now?
  2. How have my Lenten sacrifices helped me grow spiritually?
  3. Do I need to renew or adjust my Lenten commitments at this halfway point?
  4. When was the last time I went to the Sacrament of Reconciliation?
  5. How is God calling me to see more clearly and follow Him more closely?
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### Rhyme summary:

Jesus calls us to look through His eyes to no more be blinded by darkness and lies.  
 This Sunday we joyfully give God our praise, as we look on to follow Him all of our days.  
 Our Lent is now halfway completed, it’s true. What more during Lent is God calling you to do?  
 St. Patrick’s day’s coming, we’ll keep it with care, and live it in Lent style, until Easter’s there.

### Some Scriptural reasons to come to Mass each weekend

**Exodus 20:8** - "Remember the sabbath day, and keep it holy."

**Acts 2:42** - "They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers."

**Hebrews 10:24-25** - "And let us consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day approaching."

**Luke 22:19** - "Then he took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, ‘This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.’"

**John 6:53-54** - "So Jesus said to them, ‘Very truly, I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood have eternal life, and I will raise them up on the last day.’"

**Matthew 18:20** - "For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them."

**Psalm 122:1** - "I was glad when they said to me, ‘Let us go to the house of the Lord!’"

**Colossians 3:16** - "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God."

### Additional resources to learn more about God and the Catholic faith

- Check out the resource list available on [www.frmerkley.com](http://www.frmerkley.com)
- Catholic Answers: <https://www.catholic.com/>
- Word on Fire: <https://www.wordonfire.org/>
- Formed: <https://formed.org/>
- The Coming Home Network: <https://chnetwork.org/>
- Catholic Exchange: <https://catholicexchange.com/>
- Dynamic Catholic: <https://dynamiccatholic.com/>
- The Augustine Institute: <https://augustineinstitute.org/>
- Ascension Press: <https://ascensionpress.com/>
- EWTN: <https://www.ewtn.com/>
- The Catholic Company: <https://www.catholiccompany.com/>
- Busted Halo: <https://bustedhalo.com/>
- CatholicCulture.org: <https://www.catholicculture.org/>
- The Thomistic Institute: <https://thomisticinstitute.org/>
- Ignatius Press: <https://www.ignatius.com/>
- Catholic Education Resource Center (CERC): <https://www.catholiceducation.org/>