

FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT

Year A

Reading 1

Citation: 1 Samuel, Chap. 16, Verses 1b, 6-7, 10-13a
1 Samuel 16: 1b, 6-7, 10-13a

Samuel anoints David as King. This is all story, but there are several characters – God, Samuel, and Jesse. Their interchanges lay the basis for the significance of the proclamation – we find it very difficult to figure out God’s actions; yet, if we have faith we can discern what God’s Will is. Play each of the roles as forthrightly as you can. Be convinced of your message!

A reading from the first Book of Samuel

The LORD said to Samuel:

"Fill your horn with oil,
and be on your way.

I am sending you to Jesse of Bethlehem,
for I have chosen my king from among his sons."

(very short pause)

(almost commanding)

(very short pause)

(assured; very confident)

As Jesse and his sons came to the sacrifice,
Samuel looked at Eliab and thought,
"Surely the Lord's anointed is here before him."

(very short pause)

(he’s confident he “knows”)

But the LORD said to Samuel:

"Do not judge from his appearance
or from his lofty stature,
because I have rejected him.

Not as man sees does God see,
because man sees the appearance
but the LORD looks into the heart."

(“careful, my son...”)

(very short pause)

(short pause)

In the same way Jesse presented seven sons before Samuel,
but Samuel said to Jesse,
"The LORD has not chosen anyone of these."

(a bit frustrated?) (short pause)

Then Samuel asked Jesse,

"Are these all the sons you have?"

Jesse replied,

"There is still the youngest, who is tending the sheep."

(almost desperate)

(almost as if he doesn’t care)

Samuel said to Jesse,

"Send for him;

we will not begin the sacrificial banquet until he arrives here."

(commanding)

Jesse sent and had the young man brought to them.

(very short pause)

He was ruddy,
a youth handsome to behold
and making a splendid appearance.

The LORD said,

Proclamation Form

"There -- anoint him, for this is the one!"

(excited; insistent!)

Then Samuel,
with the horn of oil in hand,
anointed David in the presence of his brothers;

(very short pause)

and from that day on,
the spirit of the LORD rushed upon David.

(“rushed” is key) (triumphant)

The word of the Lord.

FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT

Year A

Reading 2

Citation: Ephesians, Chap. 5, Verses 8-14
Ephesians 5: 8-14

Paul is urging his disciples to remain people of light. That “light” is Jesus’ Spirit in them. If they revert to their old beliefs and ways they will lose Christ’s Spirit -- their light – and return to darkness. Help your listeners understand that you must insist they remain people of light!

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Ephesians

Brothers and sisters:

(get their attention!)

You were once darkness,
but now
you are light
in the Lord.

(matter-of-factly)

(very short pause)

Live as children of light,
for light produces every kind of goodness
and righteousness
and truth.

(urgency) (very short pause)
(slow to end of sentence)

(very short pause)

Try to learn what is pleasing to the Lord.
Take no part in the fruitless works of darkness;
rather
expose them,

(almost pleading?) (very short pause)

for it is shameful even to mention the things done by them in secret;

(very short pause)

but everything exposed by the light
becomes visible,
for everything that becomes visible
is light.

(voice goes up a bit)
(very short pause)

(very short pause)

Therefore,
it says:

"Awake, O sleeper,
and arise from the dead,
and Christ will give you light."

(a quote – change voice tone)

The word of the Lord.

FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT

Year A

There is a Long and Short Form of this Gospel

GOSPEL
Longer Form

Citation: John, Chap. 9, Verses 1-41
John 9: 1-41

Jesus uses the man born blind as a means of demonstrating that a new world has dawned for humanity – a world built on Love, Trust, and concern for others. John makes a big thing of the contrast between the “disciples of Moses” (those in power) and “people of light” (those who trust in Jesus and His message). Use this contrast to help you ensure that your listeners experience the difference as you proclaim the passage. The concluding section is best proclaimed as one of profound sadness on Jesus' part as He realizes the powers-that-be will not see His light.

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John

As Jesus passed by he saw a man blind from birth. (very short pause)

His disciples asked him,
"Rabbi,
who sinned,
this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" (sincere curiosity)
(very short pause)

Jesus answered,
"Neither he
nor his parents sinned;
it is so that the works of God might be made visible through him."

We have to do the works of the one who sent me while it is day.
Night is coming
when no one can work. (parenthetical)
While I am in the world,
I am the light of the world." (very short pause)

When he had said this,
he spat on the ground
and made clay with the saliva, (watch the 3 “ands”!)
and smeared the clay on his eyes,
and said to him,
"Go wash in the Pool of Siloam" (commanding tone)
-- which means Sent -- (parenthetical)
So he went and washed,
and came back able to see. (amazement!) (very short pause)

His neighbors
and those who had seen him earlier as a beggar
said, "Isn't this the one who used to sit and beg?" (almost parenthetical)
Some said, (no understanding)
"It is,"
but others said,

Proclamation Form

"No, he just looks like him."

(you're mistaken; can't be)

He said,

"I am."

(excited affirmation)

So they said to him, "How were your eyes opened?"

(more than curiosity)

He replied,

"The man called Jesus made clay and anointed my eyes
and told me, 'Go to Siloam and wash.'

(insistent)

So I went there

(had to obey!)

and washed

(flat voice)

and was able to see."

(some excitement)

(even I'm amazed!)

And they said to him, "Where is he?"

He said, "I don't know."

(saddened) (very short pause)

They brought the one who was once blind to the Pharisees.

(matter-of-factly)

Now Jesus had made clay and opened his eyes on a sabbath.

(almost parenthetical)

So then the Pharisees also asked him how he was able to see.

(voice goes up and down)

He said to them,

"He put clay on my eyes,

(mounting excitement)

and I washed,

(" ")

and now I can see."

(" ")

So some of the Pharisees said,

"This man is not from God,

(accusatory tone)

because he does not keep the sabbath."

" "

But others said,

"How can a sinful man do such signs?"

(defensive tone)

And there was a division among them.

(parenthetical)

So they said to the blind man again,

"What do you have to say about him, since he opened your eyes?"

(accusatory question)

He said,

"He is a prophet."

(fearful tone) (very short pause)

Now the Jews did not believe that he had been blind and gained his sight
until they summoned the parents of the one who had gained his sight.

(matter-of-factly)

" "

They asked them,

"Is this your son,

who you say was born blind?

(two questions in rapid succession)

How does he now see?"

His parents answered and said,

"We know that this is our son

(trying to be cooperative; but apprehensive)

and that he was born blind.

" "

We do not know how he sees now,

" "

nor do we know who opened his eyes.

" "

Proclamation Form

Ask him,
he is of age;
he can speak for himself."

(now, defensive of themselves)
“ “
“ “

His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews,
for the Jews had already agreed that if anyone acknowledged him as the Christ,
he would be expelled from the synagogue.
For this reason his parents said,
"He is of age; question him."

(parenthetical)
(insistent)
“ (very short pause)

So a second time
they called the man who had been blind
and said to him,
"Give God the praise!
We know that this man is a sinner."

(instructive; insistent)
“ (very short pause)

He replied,
"If he is a sinner,
I do not know.
One thing I do know
is that I was blind
and now I see."

(voice goes up)
(voice goes down)
(voice goes up)
(voice goes down)

So they said to him,
"What did he do to you?
How did he open your eyes?"

(insistent; very; fast pace)
(angry insistence)

He answered them,
"I told you already
and you did not listen.
Why do you want to hear it again?
Do you want to become his disciples, too?"

(exasperated)
“
(voice goes up)
(voice goes up more!)

They ridiculed him and said,
"You are that man's disciple;
we are disciples of Moses!
We know that God spoke to Moses,
but we do not know where this one is from."

(self-righteous attitude)
“ “
(almost disdain)

The man answered and said to them,
"This is what is so amazing,
that you do not know where he is from,
yet he opened my eyes.
We know that God does not listen to sinners,
but if one is devout and does his will,
he listens to him.
It is unheard of that anyone ever opened the eyes of a person born blind.
If this man were not from God,
he would not be able to do anything."

(patient tone, almost condescending)
“ “
“ “
(conviction)
“ “
(amazement)
(argumentative)
(“of course!”)

They answered and said to him,

Proclamation Form

"You were born totally in sin,
and are you trying to teach us?"
Then they threw him out.

(accusatory; angry)
(angry sarcasm)

When Jesus heard that they had thrown him out,
he found him and said,
"Do you believe in the Son of Man?"
He answered and said,
"Who is he, sir,
that I may believe in him?"

(very sincere)
(questioning tone)
(declaration; no question mark)

Jesus said to him,
"You have seen him,
and the one speaking with you is he."

(insistent)

He said,
"I do believe, Lord,"
and he worshiped him.

(affirmation)
(voice slowly goes down)

Then Jesus said,
"I came into this world for judgment,
so that those who do not see might see,
and those who do see might become blind."

(quiet but confident tone)

(very short pause)

Some of the Pharisees who were with him heard this and said to him,
"Surely we are not also blind, are we?"

(disdainful; insincere)

Jesus said to them,
"If you were blind,
you would have no sin;
but now you are saying,
'We see,'
so your sin remains."

(growing disappointment)

(mocking tone)
(slowly; very firmly)

The Gospel of the Lord.

FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT

Year A

GOSPEL
Shorter Form

Citation: John, Chap. 9, Verses 1, 6-9, 13-17, 34-38
John 9: 1, 6-9, 13-17, 34-38

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John

As Jesus passed by he saw a man blind from birth. (very short pause)

He spat on the ground
and made clay with the saliva,
and smeared the clay on his eyes,
and said to him, (story telling)

"Go wash in the Pool of Siloam" (instructive; insistent)
-- which means Sent -- (parenthetical)

So he went and washed,
and came back
able to see. (amazement!)

His neighbors
and those who had seen him earlier as a beggar said,
"Isn't this the one who used to sit and beg?" (incredulous tone) (very short pause)

Some said,
"It is," (insistent)

but others said,
"No," (negative tone)
he just looks like him." " (a mere coincidence?)

He said,
"I am." (very short pause)

They brought the one who was once blind to the Pharisees.
Now Jesus had made clay and opened his eyes on a sabbath. (parenthetical)

So then the Pharisees also asked him how he was able to see. (voice goes up then down)
He said to them,
"He put clay on my eyes,
and I washed,
and now I can see." (mounting excitement)
" " " "

So some of the Pharisees said,
"This man is not from God,
because he does not keep the sabbath." (disdain; sarcastic)

But others said,
"How can a sinful man do such signs?" (genuine disbelief in tone)

And there was a division among them. (very short pause)

So they said to the blind man again,
"What do you have to say about him," (insincere; almost mocking)

Proclamation Format

since he opened your eyes?"

(insincere; almost mocking)

He said,

"He is a prophet."

(proud; convinced)

They answered and said to him,

"You were born totally in sin,
and are you trying to teach us?"

(anger; self-righteousness)

Then they threw him out.

“ “
(very short pause)

When Jesus heard that they had thrown him out,
he found him and said,

"Do you believe in the Son of Man?"

(gentle but firm)

He answered and said,

"Who is he, sir,
that I may believe in him?"

(respectful)

Jesus said to him,

"You have seen him,
and the one speaking with you is he."

(gentle, but forceful)
“

He said,

"I do believe, Lord,"
and he worshiped him.

(slow for each word; awe)

The Gospel of the Lord.