

**THEME: "CHRIST, OUR LIGHT!"**

**History** records that a 14<sup>th</sup> - century woman had the courage to write a letter to the pope urging him to reform the church and to begin at the top. She wrote "**Blind are the sick who do not know their disease, and blind is the pastor who ought to be the healer, but who never dares to use either the knife of justice or the fire of true love.**"

- A few theologians of her day called her, "A wretched female!"
- The church years later proclaimed her as a doctor of the church and also canonized her. It was St. Catherine of Sienna.
- Her words about blindness sound very much like the words spoken by Jesus to the Pharisees in today's gospel. They both speak of **spiritual blindness**.
- Being spiritually blind is a much worse condition than physical blindness. Spiritual blindness prevented the Pharisees from seeing what was right under their nose. The miracle of restored vision happened in their midst and they tried everything in the books to deny it. Their spiritual blindness prevented them from seeing Jesus for who He really was - **The Light of the world**.

**The Scriptures today** reveal three areas that are at the root of spiritual blindness:

- **Rigidity** - the Pharisees couldn't see beyond the letter of the law. It was more important to them than the welfare of a human being. They thought they could save themselves by keeping the law. Jesus came and taught that observing the law cannot save a person - rather it is in **Faith** in Christ.
- **Fear** - Fear can paralyze us and **blind** us to many new ways to grow. Look at the poor parents of the cured man. Out of **fear** they didn't stand up in defense of their own son. They didn't want to become involved for fear they would be tossed out of the synagogue.
- **Prejudice** - Prejudice blinds the soul to new understandings. In the first reading the prophet Samuel judged by appearance only. Of the seven brothers being considered for the position of king, David was the youngest and last chosen. Only God reads the heart and He let Samuel know that David was his choice.

**At this half - way point in Lent** we are invited to examine our hearts and remove the scales that blind us spiritually. We all have **blind spots**. Since a good dose of honesty helps all of us to grow, it helps us to reflect: Do I have a blind spot in regards to, rigidity, fear and prejudice?