

ST. MARY'S CHURCH
Prayer Gathering for Fourth Week of Lent

SIGN OF THE CROSS +

OPENING PRAYER

**God... Our Beginning and Our End...
Be with us in our searching. Respond to us in our asking.
Hold us when all around us is darkness.
Fill us with your own presence
as we open ourselves fully to you.
We ask this in the power of the Holy Spirit, through Christ, our Lord. AMEN.**

READING

MOMENT FOR SILENCE

GOSPEL PASSAGE

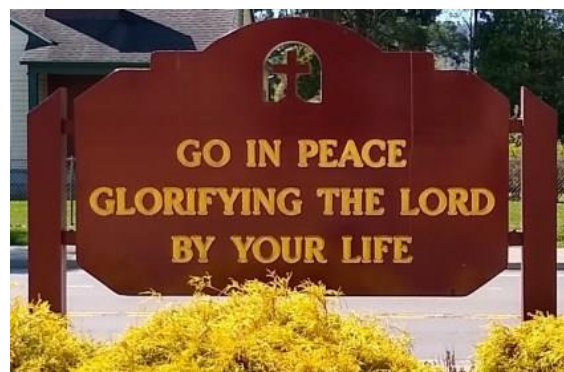
SHARING QUESTIONS

"Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?"
**Jesus' disciples made an assumption that blindness was a punishment for sin.
When have you assumed a misfortune was a punishment?
What picture does that paint of your understanding of God?**

...This is not because of sin, it is "so the works of God may be revealed through him."
**When you think of the works of God being "revealed" through someone's life,
who comes to mind? Why?**

POSTED RECENTLY

don't be ashamed
of your story — it will
inspire others.



DISCUSSION

"You were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord."
**Looking back, what season of your life do you now consider
the darkest one you ever went through? Why?
What have you taken forward from that time?**

PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL

That we may open ourselves to God's healing touch; we pray...

Lord, hear our prayer.

That our leaders may find practical ways to promote healing and illuminate injustice;
we pray...

Lord, hear our prayer.

That Easter may find us more disciplined... more prayerful and more generous... than we were
before Lent began; we pray...

Lord, hear our prayer.

That those trapped in addictive patterns will see a path to freedom and follow it; we pray...

Lord, hear our prayer.

That we will foster safe environments that protect our children's innocence; we pray...

Lord, hear our prayer.

For the sick... the homebound... those with unrelenting pain... we pray...

Lord, hear our prayer.

For our beloved dead... ..and all who grieve... ..we pray...

Lord, hear our prayer.

For the needs we now share with God in silence... ..
we pray...

Lord, hear our prayer.

OUR FATHER

[OPTIONAL] PRAYER FOR SPIRITUAL COMMUNION (St. Alphonsus Ligouri)

My Jesus, I believe that you are present in the most Blessed Sacrament.

I love You above all things and I desire to receive You into my soul.

Since I cannot now receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart.

I embrace You as if You were already there, and unite myself wholly to You.

Never permit me to be separated from You. AMEN.

CLOSING PRAYER

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. AMEN.

SIGN OF THE CROSS +

READING 1

A reading from a letter of Paul to the Ephesians

Brothers and sisters:

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

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

Try to learn what is pleasing to the Lord.

Take no part in the fruitless works of darkness;
rather expose them, for it is shameful even to mention
the things done by them in secret;

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

Therefore, it says:

*“Awake, O sleeper,
and arise from the dead,
and Christ will give you light.”*

The Word of the Lord

Thanks be to God.

READING 2

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to John:

As Jesus passed by, he saw a man blind from birth.
His disciples asked him,

*“Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents,
that he was born blind?”*

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.
While I am in the world, I am the light of the world.”*

When he had said this, he spat on the ground
and made clay with the saliva, and smeared the clay on his eyes,
and said to him, *“Go wash in the Pool of Siloam”* —which means Sent—.
So he went and washed, and came back able to see...

Later, 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?”

Jesus said to him,
*“You have seen him,
the one speaking with you is he.”*

He said, *“I do believe, Lord,”* and he worshiped him.

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.”*

The Gospel of the Lord

Praise to You, Lord, Jesus Christ

John, chapter 9