

- Last Sunday I spoke about how being a Christian demands that we learn to imitate Christ, most especially in our willingness to embrace sufferings, and to love those who hate us.
- As Christians of integrity, we must necessarily be different than everyone else in the world. Hatred, vengeance, stinginess, and malice have no place within the heart of a Christian, even toward one's enemies.
- For the measure with which we measure, will in turn be measured out to us.
- We are called to be models of charity, loving others patiently, without reserve or condition, without counting the cost, and with the willingness to suffer rather than cause suffering to others.
- This is a hard truth that, sadly, even many Christians are too blind to see, or too weak-willed to practice even if they do see it.
- Our Gospel today speaks of blindness. In truth, all of us are born into a state of spiritual blindness. Born as we are with original sin, all of us are born in a darkness whose only remedy is the light of Christ, which we are given at our baptism.
- Yet, even while baptism introduces us to the Light of Christ and makes us God's children, baptism does not guarantee that we will not take on that spiritual blindness that is the result of our personal sins.
- Understand that when we reject the law of God in favor of our pet sins, when we make pacts with our sins, or convince ourselves that our sins aren't really sins at all, it is then that spiritual blindness sets in. It is then that darkness grows within our souls.
- For sin is a mote upon the eye of the soul, a blinding ray of darkness that can cause total spiritual blindness, especially if we sin habitually or if we sin with malice.
- And the graver and more malicious our sins, the greater our blindness will be, such that we become incapable of seeing the moral landscape as it truly is.
- And when because of our spiritual blindness we no longer see the moral landscape as it truly is, our words and actions deteriorate, and we compromise our beautiful human dignity and thereby become so much less than God created us to be.
- But we can be cured of our spiritual blindness, even beyond baptism.
- It begins with cultivating humility, which enables us to become docile to God's will and His commandments, and which also helps us to see the wooden beams in our own eyes so that we might remove them. Humility helps us see our own sins and repent of them.
- Beyond humility, we must earnestly seek God's will and have frequent recourse to the Sacraments: making good and honest confessions, and receiving Holy Communion worthily and with devotion.
- Going frequently to Adoration and simply looking upon Christ present to us in the Eucharist is also a helpful remedy that, over time, helps to cure our spiritual blindness.
- Yet we must also practice well the theological virtues of faith, hope, and charity, first given to us at our baptism.
- In faith, we must be like the blind man in Jericho who repeatedly called for Jesus' help even when those around him tried to silence him. We must have faith in Christ's power to heal our blindness and beg Him repeatedly for that healing.

- In hope, we must set our hearts only on Heaven, constantly reminding ourselves that it is only there that we'll find true and lasting peace, and not here in this world. We must look always to the light of Christ, and turn away from worldly darkness.
- In charity, we must heed the words of St. Paul in his magnificent 1st Letter to the Corinthians, reminding ourselves that it matters not what we do in this world if we do anything without this most important of virtues.
- The merit of whatever good we do can only truly be measured by the charity with which we do it. As we open our hearts to others, we open our hearts to God. And as we open our hearts to God, God opens our eyes to see things as they truly are.
- Speaking of opening our hearts, it's time once again to practice charity through the Diocesan Support Appeal. Pass pledge cards; invite up speaker.