

The Light of Faith

Jn. 9:1-41



The 7 lights of Easter

THE LIGHT OF TESTING

Mt. 4:1-11

1st Sunday of Lent

THE LIGHT OF LISTENING

Mt. 17:1-9

2nd Sunday of Lent

THE LIGHT OF THE SPIRIT

Jn 4:5-42

3rd Sunday of Lent



THE LIGHT OF FAITH

Jn. 9:1-41

4th Sunday of Lent

THE LIGHT OF THE MASTER

Jn. 11:1-45

5th Sunday of Lent

THE LIGHT OF THE CROSS

Mt. 26:14 – 27:66

Palm Sunday

THE LIGHT OF EASTER

Jn. 20:1-9

Easter Sunday

From Samaria, our journey takes us south. On this Fourth Sunday of Lent, we arrive in Judea in time to participate in the Feast of Booths, during which the inhabitants of Jerusalem leave their homes for eight days and live in tents under the open sky, sprinkled with stars. The *sukkot* (plural of the Hebrew *sukka*, which means “booth” or “tent”) are a reminder of the tents in which the ancestors of the Jewish people lived during their long years of wandering in the desert. The Feast of Booths was characterized by two significant rites: the rite of *water* was observed in the morning, with everyone moving in procession to the Pool of Siloam in memory of the water that miraculously gushed from the rock during the time of the Exodus; and the rite of *light* in the evening, during which the city was illuminated by bonfires to celebrate the memory of the column of fire by means of which God enlightened the most difficult parts of the desert journey.

“As Jesus passed by, he saw a man blind from birth” (Jn. 9:1). The passing of Jesus always involves a deeper penetration of the human heart, the place where the true desires of a person are hidden and which God alone sees. The blind man he encounters had never seen the colors of the world, the smile of life, the sun of hope, the joy of festivity. How can this man born blind, an unintentional seeker of light, believe that there is a loving Presence above and beyond the darkness in which he lives—a Presence that surrounds him and preserves him in existence? This blind man’s “tent” is the street. He can’t see Jesus but he hears him passing by. Jesus stops before him and makes a paste of dirt and spittle, deliberately soiling his hands so as to create a new person by means of his own saliva.

It is Jesus who initiates the encounter by touching the blind man but the miracle doesn’t take place until the man’s faith prompts him to obey the command he receives. He senses the love that underlies the actions of Jesus and because of this he “blindly” obeys his order: “Go and wash in the Pool of Siloam” (Jn. 9:6). In other words: Go and immerse your life in the *water of the One who has been sent!* Jesus invites the blind man to trust him; to wash himself in the “new water” of the Word he has heard—a Word sent by God; a Word that judges hearts and enlightens eyes; a Word who pitches his tent wherever he finds a loving disciple ready to listen attentively to him. The blind man goes to the pool, washes himself and returns seeing. A strange destiny for a man who freely and consciously goes back to a state of solitude after he is cast out of the synagogue for believing in Jesus and receiving the gift of sight. But this does not matter to him because the light of the One who was sent is now the sole light for his eyes and the voice of the Lord Jesus is the sole melody that resounds in his heart...

Prayer

*Father,
give us an obedient heart—
one that entrusts itself
to the liberating power of your Word
even when it calls us
to make courageous choices
in the footsteps of Jesus. Amen.*