Homily for the Fourth Sunday of Lent - Year A 2023

In our Lenten reading, Matthew Kelly describes a "holy moment" as a single moment in which you open yourself to God. You make yourself available to him. You set aside personal preference and self-interest. And for one moment, you do what you prayerfully believe God is calling you to do.

I think that Matthew Kelly would agree that the healing of the man born blind in today's Gospel by Jesus was a holy moment for that man. It could also have been a holy moment for others. However, this Gospel is not only about the man who was healed of blindness but also about those who "refuse to see." The British writer, John Heywood said, *"There is none so blind as those who will not see."* Of course, that would be the Pharisees.

Trying to enter the mind of the man born blind, I imagine that all his life he thought, If only I could see like everyone else that would be all I need. Life would be so much better… However, when that moment finally came it was not as great as he would have imagined.

They interrogated him, accused him of being a sinner and threw him out of the synagogue. What is that thing that you think if only you had it your life would be complete? Or what is that thing that you believe if it was removed from your life, your life would be complete?

Of course, the truth is that no healing, no relationship, no boyfriend or girlfriend, no amount of money, or power, No job, no marriage, no family relationships, not sex, not drugs or alcohol, nothing can satisfy the incessant longing we feel to be complete. Only Jesus can fill that longing and until we realize this we will be sorely disappointed.

The man born blind finally realizes this after he is thrown out of the synagogue and Jesus finds him and says, *"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.*

A very popular religious hymn is "Amazing Grace." Whenever I sing the song I am reminded of the life of St. Augustine. Who, like many of us,

searched in all the wrong places (alcohol, a thirst for power and recognition, & excessive sexual addiction) trying to satisfy the longing deep within, only to finally discover, at the encouragement of his mother St. Monica, that the Lord is the only one to satisfy that longing. St. Augustine was then embraced by that amazing grace of which John Newton wrote in his poem, Amazing Grace, which begins, "*Amazing Grace how sweet the sound, that saved a wretch like me, I once was lost but now am found,* ***was blind, but now I see.***"

One of the most profound statements that Matthew Kelly has in the book Holy Moments is, *"The more disconnected from God our lives become, the more meaningless life becomes."* This Lenten season is meant to remind us that God is the only eternal answer to the longing deep within us. Nothing else will satisfy and all is empty without his presence.

Matthew Kelly invites us to know that we each have a divine purpose in life and that divine purpose is revealed to us in holy moments when we make the choice to open our eyes and see.

Each week we come together to join in a holy moment, asking God to open our eyes to recognize him among us in the mystery of Holy Communion. May this holy moment open our eyes that we may see him that his amazing grace may help us to become all that we can be.