

ST. JOSEPH THE BETROTHED

MELKITE GREEK- CATHOLIC CHURCH
130 ST. FRANCIS CABBINI AVENUE * SCRANTON, PA 18504

Contact office: 570.343.6092 † 570.468.4854
stjosephscranton@gmail.com * www.melkitescranton.org

PRAYER INTENTIONS

P. H. S.: Rev. Dn. Jos. Daratony. Mich. Abda. Marie Barron.
Nikki Boudreaux. George Bales Sr. Lucille Bales. Jayne Buck-
ley. Chris Carey. John Coury. Maryann Nappi Donahue. Car-
ol Downer. Dav. Fairclough, Sr. Rob. Fairclough, Sr. Sara
Gomez. Niko Mayashairo. Mary McNeilly. Jos. Ed. Bartnicki.
Sue Solsman. SusVieselmeyer. Dean & Sherry Yockey.

MEMORY ETERNAL: *Rev. Char. Aboody.*Rev. Mich. Jol-
ly.*Rev. Jos. Francavilla.*Rev. Theo. Leonarczyk*Rev. Frank
Milienewicz*Dn. John Karam.*Marie Abda.*Charlotte &
James Abda.*Marie Abda.*Nancy Abda.*Janice Assaf.*
Thalia Assaf*Paul Bauman.*A.J. Bolus. *Jos. Bolus. *Gary
Bolos.*Nich. Cianci.*Patricia Cimacosky.*Ann Coury.*
Mary Sue Betress.*Cecilia Davidson*Margt. Dillenburg*Eric
Jolly.*Jos. King *Blakely Landell. *Elaine Manuele.*Frank
Milewski, Sr.*Frank Milewski, Jr.*Mary L.Mooty.*Karen
Murray.*Marie Patchoski.*Anth. Simon.*Bill Simon.*Ruth
Sirgany. *Mary A. Walsh.*Gen. Zaydon

CLERGY:

Rev. Christopher Manuele, Presbyter

DIVINE SERVICES:

Tuesday :
Compline 0:00 P.M
Saturday:

Great Vespers: 3:15 P.M
Sunday:

Orthros 9:00 A.M.
Divine Liturgy: 10:00 A.M.

Holy Days:
Eve: Great Vespers: 5:30 P.M.
Day: Divine Liturgy ... 5:30 P.M

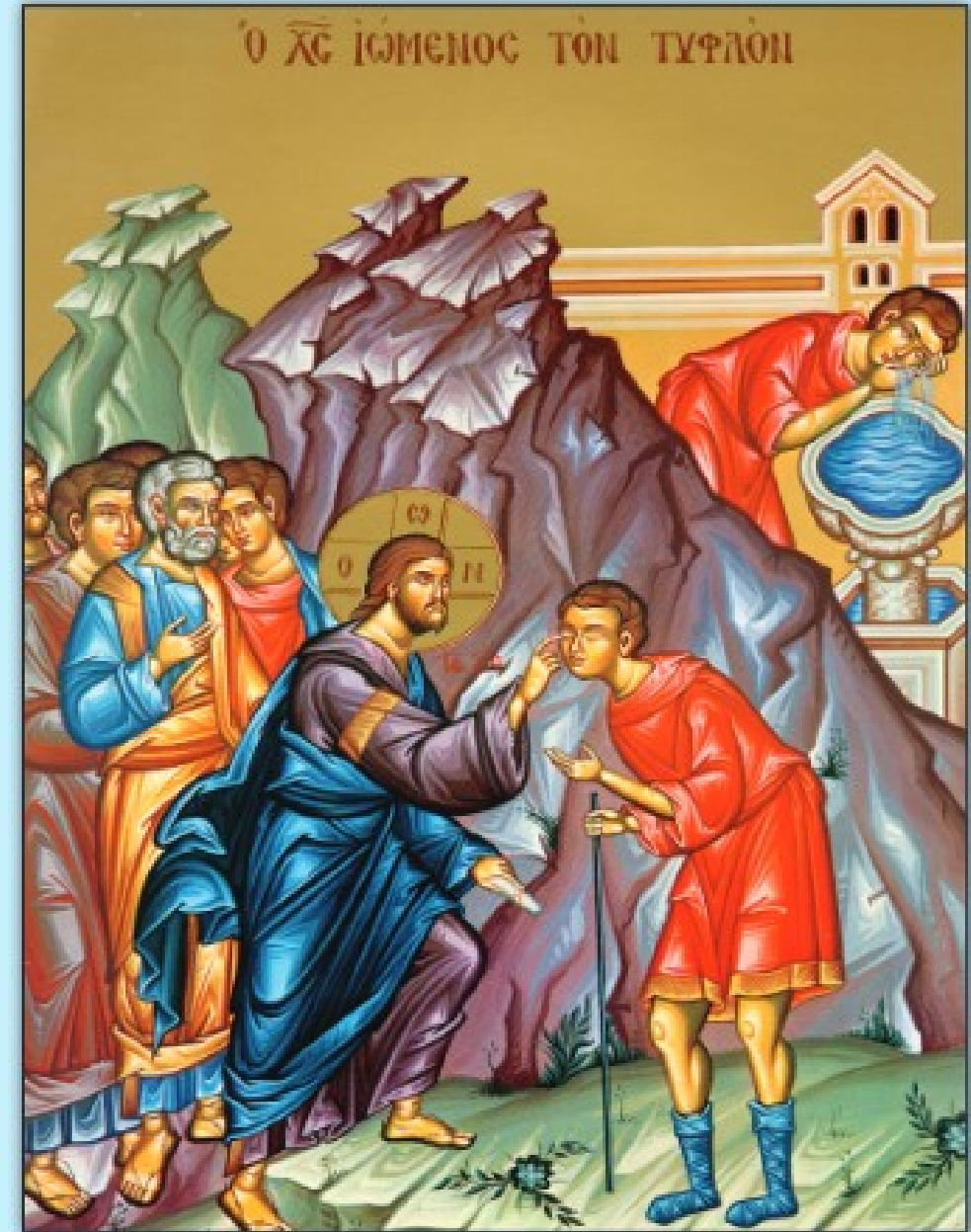
HOLY MYSTERY OF CONFESSION:
Before Vespers at 3:00 P.M.; following
any service; or by appointment.

HOLY ANOINTING OF THE SICK:
Following services /call the Rectory.

HOLY MYSTERY OF CROWNING:
Call rectory at earliest convenience.

VICTIM ASSISTANCE COORDINATOR:
Report Sexual Abuse: 1.800.479.5910

SUNDAY OF THE MAN BORN BLIND



Icon of the Man Born Blind — John 9:1-38

DIVINE LITURGY OF ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM

14 MAY 2023 ♦ TONE 05 EOTHINON 05 † SIXTH SUNDAY OF HOLY PASCHA / MAN BORN BLIND SUNDAY

GREAT DOXOLOGY:

ANTIPHONS: Pascha

FIRST:

SECOND:

THIRD:

ENTRANCE HYMN:

In the assemblies bless God, the Lord, from Israel's wellsprings.

APOLYTIKIA:

Resurrection (Tone 5)

St. Joseph the Betrothed

KONDAKION: Pascha

TRISAGION:

PROKIMENON: (Tone 5 Ps. 103: 24, 1

EPISTLE:

In those days it came to pass that as we the disciples were going to pray, we were met by a girl who had a spirit of divination and brought her masters much profit by her soothsaying. Now, she was following Paul and us, and kept crying out loudly, "These men are servants of the most high God, and they announce to you a way of salvation!" This she did for many days. But Paul could not stand it, so he turned and said to the spirit, "I order you in the name of Jesus Christ: get out of her!" And it went out of her that very moment. But seeing that their hope of profit was gone, her masters seized Paul and Silas and dragged them to the market-place before the authorities; and bringing them to the magistrates, they said, "These men are disturbing our city. They are Jews, and they advocate practices it is not permitted for us to adopt or observe, since we are Romans." And the crowd opposed them too, and the magistrates tore off their cloaks and ordered them to be beaten with rods. And after inflicting many blows on them, they threw them in jail, ordering the jailer to keep them under safe guard. And he, receiving this command, consigned them to the inner jail and fastened their feet in the stocks. But at midnight, while Paul and Silas were singing hymns to God, the prisoners listened to them. And suddenly, there was such a violent earthquake that the foundations of the jail were shaken, and at once all the doors flew open and everyone's chains came loose. But when the jailer woke up and saw all the doors of the jail open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself, thinking the prisoners had escaped. But Paul cried out in a loud voice, saying, "Do not hurt yourself, for we are all here!" Then calling for a light, he ran in, and trembling with fear, fell at the feet of Paul and Silas. And he let them out and asked, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" And they replied, "Believe in the Lord Jesus and you shall be saved together with your household." And he spoke to him the word of the Lord, and also to all his household. And he took them at that same hour of the night and washed their wounds; and he himself was baptized, and all those of his household immediately after. And taking them into his house, he set a table before them, and rejoiced with all his household over his faith in God.

ALLELUIA: Tone 5 (Ps. 88:2, 3)

Your favor, O Lord, I will sing forever; from generation to generation, my mouth will proclaim your faithfulness.

For you have said, "My kindness is established forever." In heaven you have confirmed your faithfulness.

GOSPEL:

At that time as Jesus was passing by, he saw a man blind from birth. And his disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who has sinned, this man or his parents, that he should be born blind?" Jesus answered, "Neither has this man sinned nor have his parents, but the works of God were to be made manifest in him. I must do the works of the one who sent me while it is day; night is coming, when no one can work. As long as I am in the world I am the Light of the world." When he had said these things, he spat on the ground and made clay with the spittle, and spread the clay over the man's eyes, and said to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam (which is interpreted 'sent')." So he went away, and washed, and returned seeing. The neighbors therefore and those who had seen earlier that he was blind began saying, "Is not this the man who used to sit and beg?" Some said, "It is." But others said, "He only looks like him." Yet, the man declared, "I am the one." They therefore asked him, "How were your eyes opened?" He answered and said, "The man who is called Jesus made clay and anointed my eyes, and said to me, 'Go to the pool of Siloam and wash.' And I went and washed, and I see." And they asked him, "Where is he?" He said, "I do not know." They took the man who had been blind to the Pharisees. Now, it was a Sabbath on which Jesus made the clay and opened his eyes. Again, therefore, the Pharisees asked him: how he received his sight. But he said to them, "He put clay upon my eyes, and I washed, and I see." Therefore some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God, for he does not keep the Sabbath." But others said, "How can a man who is a sinner work these signs?" And there was a division among them. Again therefore they said to the blind man, "What do you say of the one who opened your eyes?" But he said, "He is a prophet." he Jews therefore did not believe of him that he had been blind and had got his sight, until they called the parents of the one who had gained his sight, and questioned them, saying, "Is this your son, of whom you say he was born blind? How then does he now see?" His

Liturgy Book p. 17

Liturgy Book p. 180

Liturgy Book p. 29

Liturgy Book p. 32

Liturgy Book p. 180

Liturgy Book p. 38

Liturgy Book p. 43

Liturgy Book p. 47

Liturgy Book p. 181

Liturgy Book p. 23

Liturgy Book p. 58

Acts of the Apostles 16: 16-34

Liturgy Book p. 62

St. John 9:1-38

Look to the Here and Now

Just before Christ's ascension the disciples asked Him a question which He refused to answer. Expecting, as did most Jews, that the Messiah would free their nation from foreign control, the disciples "asked Him, 'Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?'" (Acts 1:6) The Lord's response has served as the Church's yardstick in discussing the Second Coming. "And He said to them, 'It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority'" (Acts 1:7). We are not meant to know when God will act; we are meant to be confident that He will do so and to live accordingly.

Earlier in His ministry the Lord Jesus told a parable that speaks to this issue: the story of the ten virgin attendants at a marriage feast (Mt 25:1-13). Five came prepared with sufficient oil for their lamps; the others did not. They had to go and buy more; and as a result they missed the feast. Jesus' final words put this parable in the context we are discussing today. "Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming" (v.13). We are to keep alert, to be prepared for the coming of the Lord – whether it is His ultimate return at the end of the age or His coming to me at the end of my life.

Commenting on this parable, St John Chrysostom says that the "oil" required for the coming of the Bridegroom is the alms we offer to those in need. Refusing to give alms marks us as fools for we have neglected to do what is needed to enter the wedding feast with the Bridegroom. We have come to the feast empty-handed because we have neglected to open our hand to the needy

Another image from this parable is found in the troparion of the Bridegroom, sung on the first days of Great Week. "Beware, therefore, O my soul lest you fall into a deep slumber and be delivered to death and the door of the kingdom be closed on you." We can easily forget that the Lord is coming and drift off to sleep if we are not constantly alert. Cultivating the life in Christ ("trimming our lamps") requires our continual attention

We are reminded to keep alert whenever we gather in the church for prayer where we stand facing east. This ancient custom which we inherit from the Old Testament era is connected in the Church to the words of Christ, "For as the lightning comes from the east and flashes to the west, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be" (Mt 24:27). We face the East, the direction of His coming, in the imagery of this saying

As we stand in church and look up we see the image of Christ in glory, the Pantocrator, in the dome or another prominent place. This is in fact the central detail in the icon of the Ascension: Christ, enthroned upon the cherubim, taken up from the disciples. Placing this icon in the domes of our churches is a graphic reminder that "This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven" (Acts 1:11).

O Lord, Your Angels spoke to Your Apostles: "Men of Galilee, why do you stand here looking up at the skies? This Christ God who has been taken from you will return, just as you saw Him go up into the heavens. Serve Him in holiness and righteousness!"

Feast of the Ascension, Hymn at the Liti

“ HE SHALL COME AGAIN ”

IN 1831 A BAPTIST PREACHER in upstate New York began to announce that the Second Coming of Christ was to take place in 1844. By that year over 100,000 people were anticipating that what William Miller had identified as the “*Blessed Hope*” of Titus 2:13 would take place on October 22. When Christ did not return on that date the “Blessed Hope” became known as the “Great Disappointment.” Remnants of this group, the first Seventh Day Adventists, then said that the Last Judgment had begun in heaven on that day.

The date of choice for early Jehovah’s Witnesses was 1914. When Christ didn’t visibly return, they said that He came invisibly in the spirit. Members were told that the world would end in 1920, 1925, 1957, 1975 and 1984. In 1995 the Witnesses announced that the end of the world had been postponed.

California radio preacher Harold Camping claimed that the world would end in September 1994, in May, 2011 and then in October, 2011. He is not the last to make such predictions. There are still groups looking to 2012, 2016 and 2034 as their target dates. No doubt others will join the parade of false prophets before long.

Conflicting prophecies are certainly nothing new. The Old Testament tells of many such disputes among the Jews, such as the struggle between Elijah and the prophets of Baal. In the first century AD, of course, the Jewish leaders considered Jesus and His followers as false prophets.

From the very beginning of the Church there were rival teachers as well. As St Paul reminded the elders of the Church at Ephesus (see Acts 20:28-29), there were competing evangelists going from community to community with a different take on the Gospel. Inevitably members of the local community would be led to follow them and themselves “*rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves*” (Acts 20:30). We would do well to reread Paul’s warning when we hear on TV or read in novels about “secret” or “newly discovered” Scriptures which “the Vatican” has suppressed. Never secret and most known since the first centuries, these writings reflect the contending religious visions among the early believers.

The “Blessed Hope”

Among the central doctrines of the Church from its earliest days has been the expected second coming of Christ. “He shall come again,” the Creeds confess, “to judge the living and the dead.” We particularly focus on this promise during the Feast of the Ascension of Christ which we are celebrating this week. The Acts of the Apostles tells of this event. Christ instructs His disciples and then is taken up out of their sight. “*And while they looked steadfastly towards heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel, who said, ‘Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven’*” (Acts 1:10-11).

The promise of Christ’s return is found in almost every New Testament book. But do the Scriptures predict when this will happen? Apocalyptic books such as the Old Testament book of Daniel and the New Testament Revelation to John indicate that the events they describe “*must shortly take place*” (Rev 1:1) but even these books are nowhere nearly as precise in dating what “shortly” means as some people have predicted.

parents answered them and said, “We know this is our son, and that he was born blind; but how he now sees we do not know, or who opened his eyes we ourselves do not know. Ask him; he is of age, let him speak for himself.” These things his parents said because they feared the Jews. For already the Jews had agreed that if anyone were to confess him to be the Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue. This is why his parents said, “He is of age; question him.” They therefore called a second time the man who had been blind, and said to him, “Give glory to God! We ourselves know this man is a sinner.” He therefore said, “Whether he is a sinner, I do not know. One thing I do know, that whereas I was blind, now I see.” They therefore asked him again, “What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?” He answered them, “I have told you already, but you did not listen. Why would you hear a second time? Would you also become his disciples?” They heaped abuse on him therefore and said, “You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. We know God spoke to Moses; but as for this man, we do not know where he is from.” In answer the man said to them, “Why herein is the marvel, that you do not know where he is from, and yet he opened my eyes. Now we know God does not hear sinners; but if anyone is a worshipper of God, and does his will, him he hears. Not from the beginning of the world has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a man born blind. If this man were not from God, he could do nothing.” They answered and said to him, “You were altogether born in sins, and do you teach us?” And they turned him out. Jesus heard they had turned him out, and when he had found him, said to him, “Do you believe in the Son of God?” He answered and said, “Who is he, Lord, that I may believe in him?” And Jesus said to him, “You have both seen him, and he it is who speaks with you.” And he said, “I believe, Lord.” And falling down, he worshipped him.

HIRMOS: Pascha

KINONKON:

COMMUNION HYMN:

POST-COMMUNION HYMN:

Liturgy Book p. 182

Liturgy Book p. 83

Liturgy Book p. 186

Liturgy Book p. 180 / Liturgy Book p. 90

SAINT JOSEPH GHURGH ANNOUNCEMENTS

EVENTS IN MAY

Saturday Evening, May 13

Confessions: 3:00 p.m.

Great Vespers: 3:15 p.m.

Divine Liturgy: 4:00 p.m.

Sunday, May 14

Man Born Blind Sunday

Mother’s Day

Divine Liturgy: 10:00 a.m.

Wednesday Evening, May 17

Vespertal Divine Liturgy: 5:30 p.m.

Thursday, May 18

ONE OF GREAT FEASTS: ASCENSION

Saturday Evening, May 20

Confessions: 3:00 p.m.

Great Vespers: 3:15 p.m.

Divine Liturgy: 4:00 p.m.

Sunday, May 21

Divine Liturgy: 10:00 a.m.

DIVINE LITURGY INTENTIONS

13 May: Mr. & Mrs. Anthony Bezouska

14 May: Catherine Zaydon

20 May: ✠Deceased Members of Barron & Shehadi Family from Marie Barron

21 May: ✠Deceased Members of Barron & Shehadi Family from Marie Barron

27 May: ✠Marie Patchoski from M/M William Patchoski Family

28 May: ✠Cecil Schwalbe from M/M Sean Fitzpatrick Family

4 June: ✠John Nasser from Sean T. Pendrak

10 June: ✠Fallen Away Catholic from Sean T. Pendrak

30 July: ✠Mary Susan Betress -10th Anniversary; ✠Mary Betress; ✠Peter Betress; ✠Sadie

2023 FOOD FESTIVAL INFORMATION

Friday, August 11

& Saturday August 12 2023:

4:00 – 9:00 p.m.

Sunday, August 13, 2023: 1:00 – 7:00 p.m.

WHO IS THE BLIND MAN?

WHO IS THE BLIND MAN? This question is not about the name of the man the Lord Jesus heals of blindness in Jn 9 (in Christian lore he is given the name Celidonus). He is not named in the Gospel account because his name is irrelevant to the meaning of the passage.

Rather the question is: Of all the people described in this Gospel passage, which one is the blind man? Several groups are mentioned in the passage: the disciples, the neighbors of the blind man, his parents and the Pharisees. The passage reveals something about each of them.

The Disciples

Christ's followers are depicted asking a theological question on seeing the man born blind: "*Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?*" (v. 2) The assumption behind their question was commonly shared by people in the ancient world: if you experienced good fortune, you were pleasing to God but if you experienced evil, it was a result of your sinfulness.

This was considered true for individuals and the entire people as well. When Jerusalem fell to the Romans in the first century AD, Jewish thinkers attributed it to the sins of the nation: The people of Israel had offended God and were punished by God withdrawing His protection from them. When Christian Jerusalem fell to the Persians in the year 614 and then to the Arabs in 638, its leaders said the same thing: Jerusalem had fallen because its Church had sinned.

While this connection might be directly or indirectly true in some cases, it is not so here. Neither the man nor his parents had sinned. The man's condition was according to the providence of God: "*that the works of God should be revealed in him*" (v. 3).

Today most people are likely to say that our good or bad fortune is not caused by direct divine intervention, but because of purely natural causes. However, it is still important to say that our choices for good or evil can and do have consequences. Societies have fallen because they embraced an immoral culture (based on violence, slavery or perversion). Abortion is sinful; it also lowers birthrates and condemns societies to extinction. Divorce has consequences for the couple's children and grandchildren. Our sinful choices have effects beyond us.

While the disciples' reaction is not recorded, we find Christians today connecting their earthly fortune to God's blessing or punishment in an automatic way. The modern Protestant movement called "the prosperity gospel," promoted by preachers such as Joel Osteen and Creflo Dollar, teaches that God wants all His people to be physically healthy and financially successful. If a person is sick or not prosperous, they claim, it is because they are not "right with God."

While the inquiring disciples in Jn 9 were not "blind," we may wonder about those today who embrace either of these extremes: by living as if their choices affect only themselves or by following the prosperity gospel.

The Neighbors

Those who knew the blind man were amazed that he could now see. Some could not conceive the possibility and asked: "*Is not this he who sat and begged?*" Some said, '*This is he.*' Others said, '*He is like him*'" (v.9). Church Fathers such as St Irenaeus, St Basil the Great and St John Chrysostom explained their confusion in this way: if the man's sight had been restored, they could accept it. This man, however, was blind from birth. He has no eyes at all. Je-

sus filled his eye sockets with clay, "adding [eyes] where before they were not" (St John Chrysostom) and gave them sight.

The Gospel says that Christ "*spat on the ground and made clay with the saliva; and He anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay*" (v. 6). The Fathers directly connect this making of clay with the creation story in Genesis. St John Chrysostom noted, "When He said, 'that the glory of God might be manifested', He spoke of Himself, ... To have said, I am He who took the dust of the earth, and made man, would have seemed a hard thing to His hearers; but this no longer stood in their way when shown by actual working. By taking earth, and mixing it with spittle, He showed forth His hidden glory; for no small glory was it that He should be deemed the Architect of creation" (St John Chrysostom, Homily 56 on John).

St Irenaeus said that this action "manifested the hand of God to those who could understand by what [hand] man was formed out of the dust" adding: "That which the artificer, the Word, had omitted to form in the womb, [viz., the blind man's eyes], He then supplied in public, that the works of God might be manifested in him" (*Against Heresies* V, 15, 2).

The Parents

The man's parents affirmed his identity: "*We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind*" (v. 20) but they evaded expressing their opinion on the miracle: "... *but by what means he now sees we do not know, or who opened his eyes we do not know. He is of age; ask him. He will speak for himself*" (v. 21). John explains their reticence in this way: to affirm the miracle would be to avow that Jesus was the Messiah. "*His parents said these things because they feared the Jews, for the Jews had agreed already that if anyone confessed that He was Christ, he would be put out of the synagogue. Therefore his parents said, 'He is of age; ask him'*" (vv. 22, 23).

It may have to be explained to us, but Jews would assume that only the Messiah empowered by God could engage in a creative act. It would be easier to claim ignorance than to affirm that God was at work in Jesus and risk the consequences. This might be wisdom in the world, but it would be blindness in the spiritual realm.

The Pharisees

The Pharisees are the "heavies" in this portion of John. In the previous chapter, John 8, Jesus condemns them for not seeing God at work in Him, calling them sons of the devil (see Jn 8:44). In chapter 10, the leaders of the Jews again confront Jesus, demanding to know whether He was the Messiah. Jesus replies, "*I told you, and you do not believe. The works that I do in My Father's name, they bear witness of Me. But you do not believe, because you are not of My sheep*" (Jn 10:25, 26).

Jesus' healing of the man born blind concludes with another encounter with the Pharisees (Jn 9:39-41). He reproaches them indirectly, saying "*For judgment I have come into this world, that those who do not see may see, and that those who see may be made blind.*"

But the Pharisees challenge Him further. "*Then some of the Pharisees who were with Him heard these words, and said to Him, 'Are we blind also?'*" "Jesus said to them, '*If you were blind, you would have no sin; but now you say, 'We see.'*' Therefore, your sin remains."

The blind man had no sight through no fault of his own. The Pharisees claimed to see, without realizing that their pretension made them worse than blind.

Self-righteousness in religion can render us as blind as they. Relying on the Gospel as preached in the Church can free us from the blindness that results from being one's own guide.