



identity he answers, "He is a prophet" and later on that he is a "man... from God", which is true but not enough. He can see with the eyes of his body, but the eyes of his heart still are unable to see God.

AUTHENTIC WORSHIP

Only faith purifies our hearts and enables them to perceive God: "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God" (Matthew 5:8). This happens when we reach the apex of this episode. Jesus finds the man and this time asks him, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?", a title which in scripture means God. When the man replies, "And who is he, sir?", Jesus gives this pregnant answer: "You have seen him, and the one speaking with you is he." God can be recognised as "the one who speaks with us", that is the one who constantly tries to enter into a conversation with us, talk to us, persuade us of how much God cares for us. This God is invisible and yet we can see God by listening to God, by trusting in God, and only in this way can we finally have access to authentic worship – as the man does in the Gospel: "He said, 'Lord, I believe.' And he worshipped him."

Luigi Gioia is Research Associate of the Von Hügel Institute for Critical Catholic Inquiry, St Edmund's College, Cambridge University, and the author of *Say it to God: The Archbishop of Canterbury's Lent Book 2018* and *Touched by God: The Way to Contemplative Prayer* – www.sayittogod.com

Mass text

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

**Rejoice, Jerusalem, and all who love her.
Be joyful, all who were in mourning;
exult and be satisfied at her consoling breast.**

FIRST READING 1 Samuel 16:1. 6-7. 10-13

PSALM Psalm 22

RESPONSE **The Lord is my shepherd;
there is nothing I shall want.**

1. The Lord is my shepherd;
there is nothing I shall want.
Fresh and green are the pastures
where he gives me repose.
Near restful waters he leads me,
to revive my drooping spirit. **R.**
2. He guides me along the right path;
he is true to his name.
If I should walk in the valley of darkness
no evil would I fear.
You are there with your crook and your staff;
with these you give me comfort. **R.**
3. You have prepared a banquet for me
in the sight of my foes.
My head you have anointed with oil;
my cup is overflowing. **R.**

4. Surely goodness and kindness shall follow me
all the days of my life.
In the Lord's own house shall I dwell
for ever and ever. **R.**

SECOND READING Ephesians 5:8-14

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

**Glory to you, O Christ, you are the Word of God!
I am the light of the world, says the Lord;
anyone who follows me will have the light of life.
Glory to you, O Christ, you are the Word of God!**

GOSPEL John 9:1-41

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

**The Lord anointed my eyes: I went, I washed,
I saw and I believed in God.**

Next Sunday's Readings:

Ezekiel 37:12-14
Romans 8:8-11
John 11:1-45

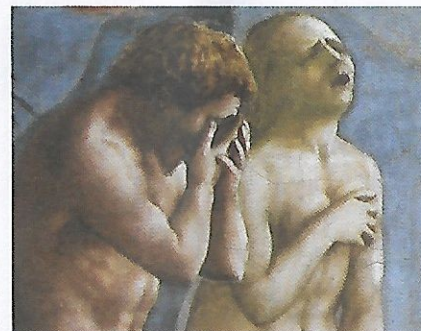


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SUNDAY BULLETIN

EYES WIDE SHUT

One of the main obstacles to authentic worship is that we do not see God; we are blind to God's presence and action in our lives. The day Adam and Eve yielded to the serpent's suggestions in the garden of Eden and mistrusted God, "their eyes were opened and they knew that they were naked" (Genesis 3:7). In fact, the real meaning of this passage is that their eyes were closed. The moment they started seeing their partner's body as an object of lust, they lost sight of the other as a person, as a gift from God, as someone to be cherished in a disinterested, loving and caring way. Our inability to see other people, our surroundings and nature as a gift from God compromises our relation to reality: we perceive things only in reference to ourselves, only insofar as they profit us, satisfy us. This is a form of blindness. I do not see the face of my neighbour with her invaluable uniqueness; I see her only as an opportunity or a hindrance or indifferently.



This is why the Gospel attributes blindness not to the man who was born unable to see but to the Pharisees. They have functioning eyes, they cast them on people and think that they can decide who is a sinner and who is not. However, they are blind because they do not recognise Jesus, they can't acknowledge the extraordinary miracle that has happened under their nose, they cannot see the presence and action of God in their midst. When Jesus says that he has come "so that those who see may become blind" he means that his light unmasks our illusions about ourselves, our pretence in our relations with others and our real intentions – "for the Lord does not see as mortals see: they look on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart" (1 Samuel 16:7), as God says to Samuel. We should remember this whenever we are tempted to judge someone. We trust our views; we see everything from our point of view, use our own criteria and feel sure that we are right. Our eyes might be open and functioning but this is not enough. This is why there are two stages in the healing of the blindness of the main character of today's Gospel and access to authentic worship only comes at the end of this process. The opening of his physical eyes is not enough. After he has been healed by Jesus, he is willing to acknowledge the gift he has received but remains confused about Jesus' identity. When he is asked where Jesus is, he answers, "I do not know." When he is questioned about Jesus'

The path to worship



We continue our reflections for Lent with Dr Luigi Gioia.

22 MARCH 2020

4TH SUNDAY OF LENT

YEAR A

DIVINE OFFICE WEEK IV