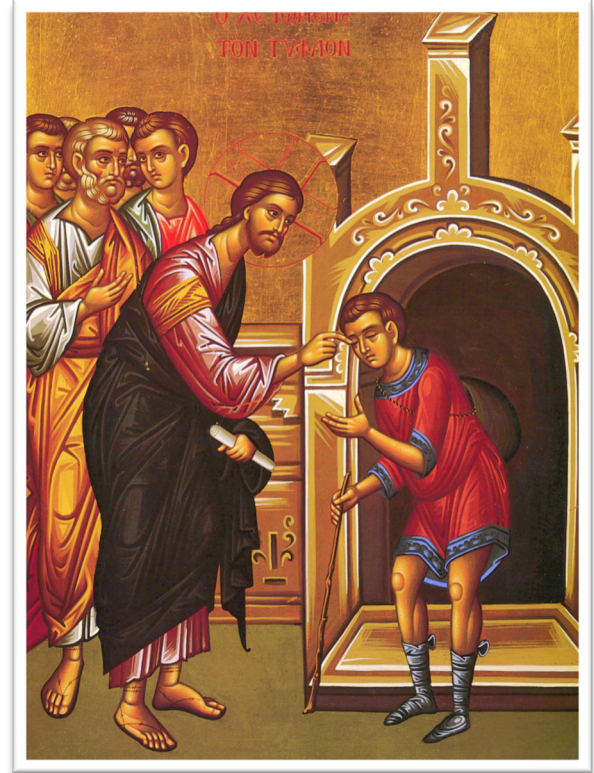


Family Gospel Lesson

John 9:1—38

As with all of His miracles, there is great significance to Jesus Christ healing the blind man. It is the only time we hear of a person whose sight was received after having been blind from birth. In those days, there was a pervasive belief that sickness was a direct result of sin. Therefore, the Lord is questioned whether the sin of the man or his parents is the root cause of his blindness. And while humanity's sin, the primordial sin, is the reason for all sickness, suffering, and death, Jesus Christ discredits the notion that it was the personal sin of either this man or his parents that led to his impairment. Rather, the man's lack of sight will serve a greater purpose—to glorify God. Although few of us need to be healed of physical blindness, all of us need to be cured of our spiritual blindness—the sin that keeps us from living a life in Christ.



For Consideration

- What is happening in this Gospel lesson?
- Why do the Pharisees react negatively to such a miracle? How does the man who was granted sight respond to the Pharisees' questions? Why can't the Pharisees accept the blind man's explanation of who Jesus is?
- What does this Gospel passage mean for our lives?

TO DO TOGETHER

Blindfold, Please

Take turns blindfolding different members of your family and having another family member guide them around. After everyone has had a turn, discuss what it was like not being able to see. Discuss how we can be spiritually blind and how we can work to see properly as Orthodox Christians.

Witness

The once-blind man, having received his sight, responds to Jesus Christ's critics with great conviction. Discuss how we can be spiritually blind and how we can work to see properly as Orthodox Christians.

Support

As we learn in today's Gospel there are often many misconceptions regarding people with disabilities. When questioned by the disciples as to whose sin caused this man to be born blind, Jesus states, "Neither this man nor his parents sinned, but that the works of God should be revealed in him." How can the works of God be revealed through our weaknesses? As you discuss this, visit Arms Open Wide: Orthodox Christian Disability Resources Web site (armsopenwide.wordpress.com/). This online resource was developed to support those with disabilities in the Orthodox Church. We can shed much light on our blindness to the special needs of those around us by reviewing some of its resources.

Closing Prayer

Being blinded in the eyes of my soul, O Savior, I come to you, O Christ, as did the man who was born blind. And in repentance I cry to You, "Of those in darkness You are the most radiant Light."

—Kontakion of the Blind Man

Final Thought

If we are to see again, a miracle must take place. Jesus must touch our eyes as He touched the eyes of the man born blind. Then we will begin to see. Then we will come to realize that without Jesus no man can truly see and with Him no man can be truly blind. He is the opener of the eyes of the soul, and without Him it is always darkness.

—from Gems from the Sunday Gospels in the Orthodox Church by Anthony Coniaris



Center for Family Care of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America

79 Saint Basil Road, Garrison, NY 10524

845-424-8175 • familycare@goarch.org • www.family.goarch.org