

How's your week been? However it has been, and oh boy, has it been a week for all of us, our readings this weekend have something to say about it. If you've been overwhelmed by the madness and chaos of the world coming unglued around you, the Twenty-third Psalm, the great Shepherd Psalm, reminds us that God has even this madness under control. He will guide us through the chaos and darkness like a shepherd guides his sheep. And we will know peace, safety and stability again in greener days. Breath. Keep breathing. It's in God's hands. He has even this under control.

If you've found yourself asking, "Why is this happening?" the Gospel reading opens with much the same question. The Gospel story opens with the disciples asking whose fault it is that the man is blind. If the "this" you are asking about is covid-19, you can engage in all the blame games and finger pointing and speculative nonsense, but that only keeps you looking into the darkness. Ask instead where is God in all this and how might I help, and we just may see the works of God that Jesus promises us in today's Gospel will be made visible.

If the "this" you're asking about is the craziness happening in your own life, realize you're not alone. A friend mentioned that she hoped she didn't return home to find the pre-teen and teenage children had destroyed the house. Another posted a meme with a fervent hope that the kids didn't start fighting during a conference call for work. Many of us are living in unfamiliar situation like working from home with kids home from school, or having to trust new child care arrangements. The kids, the dog, the cat or something will run amuck during that conference call for work. The teenager who is you backup child care plan will run into a situation they don't know how to handle. This is just the new normal, at least for the time being. Breath. Keep breathing. And laugh. It hurts less than crying. And a prayer to the Holy Family to keep the kids from really destroying the house is probably a good idea.

Have you had to deal with those who are unreasonable? In the Gospel, the Sanhedrin is full of people who can only see their own narrow point of view. You may not be able to change them, but you don't have let them drag you down. As the Lord tells us, do good to those who wrong you, pray for those who persecute you. These are also good Lenten practices.

Many may be concerned about their financial situation. Suddenly finding yourself without work and unsure if you will be paid or not is very scary. When will the State allow things to return to normal? Can I and my family hold out that long? Much is uncertain and answers are few. Don't destroy yourself with pointless worrying, instead remember that the Lord is with you. Somehow, the Lord will see you through.

Hopefully, this coming week we can begin to settle into this new normal. If you find yourself with time on your hands, pray. It is Lent after all. You should be praying more. Maybe you

could check out FORMED, the online faith resource that is video based. If you need to set up an account please check the parish website, the bulletin or the new e-newsletter. Praying or expanding our knowledge of the faith are all ways to seek the Lord as did the blind man, echoing his words, who is the Son of Man, that I may believe? in our case, believe more deeply.

These weeks dealing with covid-19 health threat will be a trying time for everyone. Jesus broke the Sabbath laws by curing the blind man on the Sabbath. This challenged the faith of the people of that time in that place. Some only saw broken rules, others saw the hand of God. As we face the challenge posed by these weeks of closings and quarantine, we can also choose to face them with grace and a positive outlook which offers light and hope to others, or we can choose a more negative path. I hope we will choose to face this crisis with grace, trusting in the Lord to see us through.