

Fourth Sunday of Lent: Original Sin and Social Sin

"The Word in Liturgy"

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I. The themes of blindness/sight and darkness/light

A. The themes of blindness/sight and darkness/ light are so prominent in this week's readings to continue the tradition of catechesis aimed at preparing for Easter baptisms.

1. The description of *God's* choice of David over his brother that is found in 1 Samuel is a tale of human blindness that shows our inability to see spiritual truth as *God* sees it.
2. The blindness of those around David shows his potential for being an instrument of *God's* power in a symbol on many levels of how sin can blind us to *God's* will for us and for the world.

II. Sin

A. Time of darkness

1. The desperate situation of the human race without Christ.

III. Social Sin

A. Christ will give you light. The fruits of Christ's savings (goodness, justice, and truth) eradicate the effects of what contemporary theology calls Social Sins.

1. Social Sin is not the same as original sin, but flows from it.
2. Social Sin is the cumulative result of human choices to turn away from the light.

IV. Original Sin

A. The figure of a man blinded from birth is a fitting image of the human condition known as Original Sin.

1. Without personal fault or responsibility, the man lives in truly "in the dark" of a sinful world.
2. Who is truly blind are those who stubbornly refuse to accept Jesus as the light of the world.
3. The dramatic unfolding of John's story ([Jn. 9:1-41](#)) gives eloquent expression to the way individuals in a community compound their blindness, to their own and other's detriment.
4. Adam and Eve, by turning away from God and choosing to go against the divine prohibition, they not only shattered the harmony of body and soul, but experienced alienation from their creator and all creation. ([CCC 400](#))
5. The (Vatican II) Council fathers in reflecting upon the experience of the world, noted that we are "drawn towards what is wrong and sunk in many evils, which cannot come from our good creator."-God is not the author of sin, but is the author of our redemption in Christ. (GS 13.1)
6. It is precisely because one offered salvation in Jesus that we are enabled to more clearly identify an original alienation from God. The very notion shows a fallen state, a harmful captivity, and a loss.
7. The opposite poles of the good news of our release and liberation through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. ([CCC 389](#))
8. The primeval event of original sin permeates this world. Born again to the new life of grace (baptism), we nevertheless find ourselves on a battleground, struggling

against the powers of evil, and must constantly strive to do what is right.

9. Assisted by God's grace, the human person can achieve an "inner integrity." (GS 37.2) Inner Integrity does not spare the individual from committing sin from time to time.
10. The very inclination to sin is the result to the tragedy of original sin and is stirred up by communal situations, social structure, and institutions that are in conflict with the divine graciousness. ([CCC 408](#))
11. By faith, hope, and love given at baptism, we struggle to live out the grace of our salvation in Christ. Cooperation with the mystery of grace at work in the world is the continual responsibility of the baptized.
12. Moments of triumph over evil systems are signs indicating the as yet to be completed victory of grace at work.