



Lent reflection for Friday, March 24th

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John 9:1-11

As Jesus walked along, he saw a man blind from birth. His disciples asked him, 'Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?' Jesus answered, 'Neither this man nor his parents sinned; he was born blind so that God's works might be revealed in him. We must work the works of him 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 this, he spat on the ground and made mud with the saliva and spread the mud on the man's eyes, saying to him, 'Go, wash in the pool of Siloam' (which means Sent). Then he went and washed and came back able to see. The neighbors and those who had seen him before as a beggar began to ask, 'Is this not the man who used to sit and beg?' 'Some were saying, 'It is he.' Others were saying, 'No, but it is someone like him.' He kept saying, 'I am the man.' But they kept asking him, 'Then how were your eyes opened?' He answered, 'The man called Jesus made mud, spread it on my eyes, and said to me, "Go to Siloam and wash." Then I went and washed and received my sight.'

Today's reflection is by Jane Miller

"Oh no, not something about vision." I've been to the eye doctor dozens of times over the past two decades, have had around thirty medication injections into my right eye, and wear not-so-sporty sports goggles when I play soccer, owing to a condition similar to wet macular degeneration that I developed when I was 19. While my vision in my left eye is fine, that's not the case for my right eye.

I've spent more time than most people my age, than most people generally, in ophthalmology exam rooms. And I've thought a lot about the technicians and doctors who bridge the gap between medical progress and scared, bewildered, and anxious patients- the people who do the

actual work of healing. Imaging technology and medications have gotten so much better over the past twenty years, but patients can only ever be seen one at a time.

We live in a world of aggregates, of optimization, of scalability- those imperatives are real. How pain-free the world they promise! How friction-free! One of the best things about Christianity and of this Gospel passage is that they remind us that every human being is made in the image of God and has infinite value, and that we must resist abstracting that fact away. The human condition is not painless, and other people are the definition of friction. Don't retreat from that fact! Lean into it!

Jesus stopped and healed the blind man, the blind man whose life was not an abstraction- and Jesus got his hands dirty in the process. My eye doctors and their teams helped me in real time, one visit at a time, where the point of the work was not optimizing past it. To me, that's God's work revealed, and what we are called to do. Those trips to the doctor, this passage, and faith itself challenge me to look for how I can do the same.

Jane Miller has been attending Holy Apostles since January 2022. Originally from southeastern Virginia, she currently works for the City of New York and lives in Windsor Terrace.

