

Needy Week 4

Welcome to the fourth week of our series Needy. We've been discovering just how needy we really are.

We have a lot of needs: we have physical needs, emotional needs and spiritual needs.

Previously, we talked about our greatest need, the need for God, and how he reaches us through our needs. And last week, Fr Gary talked about the need for both work and the need for rest.

If you missed any of the previous homilies in this needy series, just go to our website www.gslakeshore.com and you can read them there.

Today we're going to talk about another need. We may not want to hear about this need, but it's important to address it.

So let's start by talking about that one person in our lives, the one person that we all know. We may find that person at work; it could also be a friend, or someone we do sports with. The person I'm talking about is the person who's always right..... I mean, always right.

They don't listen to advice; don't hear any other suggestions. It's their way or the highway. They don't make mistakes, they never apologize, but somehow they're always there to tell you how to do it better.

For example... I have a friend who has to be right, all the time. He is a very intelligent person, he is both an academic and someone who can do anything with his hands. He's the guy I love to envy because his life is so together; mine on the other hand, is scattered and unorganized; just ask Mary, she'll tell you how unorganized my life really is.

So my friend is “perfect” in almost every way. But the problem is that eventually, he makes a mistake and it's devastating to him because he has this perfect image to maintain.

He spends an enormous amount of his time maintaining that image. When it develops a crack, he goes into damage control; makes excuses or blame someone else. It is, without a doubt, exhausting for him to maintain this image.

The trouble here is pride. Pride is a big problem in our world, and always has been. Our self image and how others see us is so important to us.

Social media is all about presenting a polished image of ourselves. Pictures of fancy vacations, cool people doing cool things; all kinds of selfies; all this to make their lives look fascinating to others.

Public discussion in many cases, is not so much about dialogue, but rather about demonizing the opponent or making them look foolish or intolerant, all so that other opinions can look like the better choice.

This all leads to a very distorted view of ourselves and others. What we think becomes twisted and confused. We can end up with either an inflated view of self, or a deflated view of self.

Inflated view says

- I'm doing pretty good
- I'm better than most
- I'm not needy
- I can't help it if my way is the best way.

Deflated view says

- I'm not doing so good

- I never get anything right
- I won't find that special someone
- I'm beyond hope

This kind of thinking is rooted in pride and both of these views are a **great** disservice to God.

One says "I don't need God" and the other says "I don't trust God, I don't think He can really help me".

And so we need to be *healed* of our pride. And that means that we need a new view of our world, a new view of God, and a new view of ourselves. What we need is a true view of who we really are.

Today's Gospel tells the story of a man that needed healing. He was born blind but as we see in the Gospel, he wasn't the only one suffering from blindness.

This man has a very profound encounter with Jesus. He doesn't initiate this encounter, Jesus does. He doesn't ask for healing but is healed anyway.

Maybe that's us today. Maybe we're unaware of our own blindness, maybe we don't even recognize our own needs before God.

Pride does that. It blinds us to our true neediness. It blinds us to who we really are.

But the blind man is open to Jesus. He is all too painfully aware of his own needs and his dependence on the kindness of others. He likely has no income, so he probably has to beg. He has no illusions about his situation and can't hide his brokenness before others. Maybe, just maybe, because of his great need, he was able to do what Jesus asked of him, without the question that many of us would ask: How can anything you do cure me?

Healing comes in many forms and in my life it wasn't always the healing I've prayed for, but it was healing nonetheless.

Fr Richard Rohr writes on the miracles of Jesus and he has this to say:

Notice how most of Jesus' ministry is about healing people. Notice also how many of those healings have to do with blindness and the distorted views that come from blindness (Luke 6.39-42).

Why is that? It's because what was true in Jesus' time, is still true today. Many of us see only with our eyes and not with our hearts; not with our souls; not with the eyes of faith.

In our first reading, God says to Samuel:

“Do not look on his appearance....the human looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart”

When we look at others, or ourselves, do we look on appearances or do we look on the heart? *Do we need a new perspective?*

God loves each and every one of us. He sees us as his *beloved*, in spite of *anything* we could do to disappoint Him!

I recently had a restoration of sight; I had cataract surgery and what was unclear, distorted and fuzzy, is now very clear.

That what happens when we view ourselves and others through the “lense” of God.

We need to see ourselves as God sees us. This is *critical* to our peace and our well-being.

Do you know what God thinks of you? Yes, he knows about all your mistakes, he knows

about all your sins, but he sees more than that. He sees your heart. He sees you as:

Courageous – you can make the right choices in the face of adversity

Trustworthy – no matter what anyone has said about you in the past

Beautiful – your heart is beautiful, your body is beautiful

Confident – able to tackle any problem at home, at work, at school

Talented – smart, capable, hard working

Generous – giving, helpful, a blessing to others

He sees you as His beloved, his child, his everything!

The true view of you is to see yourself as God sees you.

So this week, we have some more homework. The good news is there's no exam! This week, write yourself a letter, from the perspective of God. This will help us all to see who we really are in His eyes.

At the top of the page, write down *John 3: 16*.
(*For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life*).

Next, write yourself a letter from the voice of God. What does God have to say about your life right now? What would he say about your attitudes, your relationships, your challenges your worries, your hopes and dreams? How would he encourage you?

Every time you're stuck and don't know what God would write, read the verse at the top of the page to remind yourself just how much He loves you.

Knowing our needs and taking the time to meet them is not selfish. It is living in the reality that we are children of God. We are needy. And through the grace of God, we'll eventually come to understand our greatest