

Introduction to this Sunday's Lectionary readings:

Fourth Sunday in Lent—Year A.

I Samuel 16: 1-13 Sometimes things do not work out, even when God had a part in initiating them. Such is the case leading up to our reading, but God quickly moves on. Saul had been made king, and Samuel the prophet followed the Lord's direction in choosing Saul—but God eventually regretted this choice. In today's reading, God is ready to move forward and choose a new king and prompts Samuel to move forward too. The way forward is surprising, with the least likely being chosen to be king, chosen only because Samuel was faithful to God's leading. The new king is David.

Psalms 23 has a beauty in its simplicity. The simplicity is not naïve but reflects a profound and rich faith that trusts God to faithfully lead in and through all things. Verses 1, 2 & 6 speak of the Lord in the third person, whereas verses 3-5 address God in the second person, speaking directly to God. The writer of this Psalm seems closest to God at the darkest and most difficult times of life.

Ephesians 5:8-14 Paul reminds the saints in Ephesus of their conversion from darkness to light and exhorts them to live as children of light.

John 9:1-41 One would think that the healing of a blind man is a good thing. Yet this healing sparked controversy and led to an investigation. It led to division among the religious leaders as some of them stressed, *This man is not from God for he does not keep the Sabbath*. When Jesus, the light of the world, appeared some seemed to prefer darkness.

Next Sunday's readings: Ezekiel 37:1-14; Psalm 130; Romans 8:6-11; John 11:1-45