

3rd Sunday of Advent (A)

December 14, 2025

“The eyes of the blind are opened in Advent”

How’s your eyesight these days? How long, if ever, have you worn glasses or contacts? As we age, we need more help to see than when we were younger. There are many different kinds of eye trouble, including glaucoma, cataracts, and blurred vision. But even more concerning than physical blindness is the reality of spiritual blindness. Spiritual blindness is the inability to see grace at work in the world.

In the first reading, the prophet Isaiah describes the transformation of the desert into fertile ground at the coming of God. “*The desert and the parched land will exult,*” he writes, “*the steppe will rejoice and bloom.*” The desert is a world God has not yet visited, but now he is on the way. When he arrives, miracles will happen, including “*the eyes of the blind [being] opened*” (35:5). When the Lord comes, senses open wide and limbs loosen up.

The words of Isaiah are echoed in the Gospel, which records the observations of Our Lord’s disciples, recounted by Jesus himself, including, “*The blind [regain] their sight*” (Mt. 11:5). The darkness that burdened John in prison kept him from recognizing the Messiah. Our Lord told John’s disciples to look at the miraculous deeds done in their midst as evidence that the Messiah had arrived.

Jesus went on to cure blind men in his ministry (Mt. 12:22), and Saint Paul, who experienced blindness, was cured after Jesus knocked him off his horse on the way to Damascus (Acts 9:18). God wants his followers to have 20/20 spiritual sight.

Advent is an opportunity for the spiritually blind to see again. It is a chance for God to remove the cataracts and other spiritual afflictions which keep us from seeing Christ clearly. We are often blind to the presence of Christ in our poor brothers and sisters; we are blind to his presence in those with whom we disagree, and we are blind to our own faults and foibles, sins and weaknesses.

The eyes of faith, purified by grace and repentance, can open us to the mystery of Christ. The eyes of faith see the power of God in a mountain, the strength of God in a lion, the mystery of God in a cloud, the gentleness of God in a lamb, the beauty of God in a sunset, the purity of God in a snowflake, the sound of God in an Advent hymn, the message of God in a Bible, the reach of God in a Hallow

app, and so much more. Self-love causes spiritual blindness, and Advent is a time to be purified of self-love so the love of God can shine in and through us.

The Luminous Mysteries of the Rosary can help us. These five mysteries, given to the Church by Pope Saint John Paul II, are lights on the path of Christ, opening new vistas to our relationship with the Savior. The Baptism in the Jordan, the Miracle at Cana, the Proclamation of the Kingdom, the Transfiguration, and the Institution of the Eucharist are five mysteries that can shed light on the mystery of Christ and bring us to new levels of love. Have you prayed the Luminous Mysteries? If not, you should. Thursday is the designated day for them, and I suggest you use it to offer these mysteries.

The saints can also help us, and the best saint for those struggling with eye diseases, impaired vision, protection of eyesight, and the need for clarity and discernment is **Saint Lucy**.

Lucy, whose name means “light,” kept the light of her loyal faith burning brightly. She was born in Sicily, and died in the persecution of the Roman Emperor Diocletian (around 304 AD). Lucy is said to have made a vow to remain unmarried. When a man whom her father insisted that she marry found out, he reported her to the authorities. Even though they tortured her, Lucy remained faithful to Christ. At the end of her life, it is said that the authorities gouged out her eyes, which is why she often portrayed as holding a plate with eyes on it. Apparently, her eyes were restored after her death.

Lucy’s feast comes during Advent, when we wait for the coming of Christ, the Light of the world. In Norway, Denmark, and Sweden, a young girl dressed in a white dress and a red sash (symbol of martyrdom) carries palms and wears a crown of candles on her head in a procession. In Sweden, girls dressed as Lucy carry rolls and cookies in procession as songs are sung on her feast.

Lucy is a symbol of spiritual vision, the eyes of faith, purity of heart, and the light of Christ guiding the soul. She can guide our Advent journey with her prayers and example, replacing self-love in us with God’s love in us.

As we celebrate Gaudete, or Rejoice, Sunday, may the Luminous Mysteries and the luminous Lucy inspire and guide us. God bless you.