

BRINGING HOME THE GOSPEL

March 22, 2020 • 4th Sunday of Lent • John 9:1-41

Living Out Loud

The Pharisees continue to try to find something they can convict Jesus of. They question the blind man that Jesus healed. Hoping to trap him into saying something to incriminate Jesus, they persecute the man with words. The blind man continued to tell the truth.

There are all sorts of ways of being persecuted. The Pharisees laughed at and ridiculed the blind man for speaking the truth. A few years later, Stephen became the first Christian martyr for speaking his truth. I admire these men for their courage, particularly when I consider my own lack of it.

I don't think I would ever disavow being a Catholic, but at the same time I wonder why sometimes it looks like I'm trying to keep it a secret. I remember sitting in a restaurant recently and seeing an elderly couple bless themselves and say grace before eating their meal. I was impressed, and had to wonder why I feel so uncomfortable making the Sign of the Cross in a crowded restaurant. I know that in the United States nobody's going to stone me for my faith.

However, persecution can come in a variety of forms and degrees, from the ultimate price of martyrdom to the subtle disrespect of being laughed at. There may seem to be no comparison between the two, but the discomfort of being left out or talked about still hurts. Sometimes it takes courage to live one's faith openly.

We may live in a free society, but folks see religion as a private matter. If we pray out loud, men-

tion the Bible, or talk about what the priest said on Sunday, our coworkers may be inclined to negatively consider us religious fanatics. Blessed are those who witness to their faith anyway.

The best place to practice living your faith out loud is at home. Pray together with your family before meals and at bedtime, take turns reading the Bible to each other, talk about Sunday's Gospel and homily. Let your children see you witness your faith to the outside world, even if it is just by making the Sign of the Cross in a crowded restaurant.

FAMILY RESPONSE

Talk about how each family member can let the light of faith shine. How can all of you as a family live your faith out loud?

PERSONAL RESPONSE

How comfortable are you sharing your faith at home or outside the home? How do you feel about this? What do you want to remember from last week? What are you looking forward to next week? What are your concerns?