



## SAINT LOUIS ABBEY



### Seeing

#### Homily for 02 December 2005

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Think what seeing means to us.

We've all had the experience of groping around at night, bumping into things. Imagine a world where that were our normal condition, as it is for many people like the two men in today's Gospel. No TV, no internet, no movies, no beautiful days, no art, no sightseeing. And what about mental seeing, seeing the meaning of a play or a theorem or a philosophical argument? This kind of seeing is something we crave, even need to get on in the world. Finally there is spiritual seeing, seeing the meaning of life, seeing that your life has a goal.

Seeing is a basic appetite, a human need. That's why we listen when the word of God offers to bring light. That day, says Isaiah, the deaf shall hear the words of a book; and out of gloom and darkness, the eyes of the blind shall see. He is talking about real physical blindness, yes, such as Jesus healed in the Gospel. But there is a deeper blindness that needs enlightenment, a blindness that we all share.

The psalmist put it best: "Who will make us see good things? Lift up the light of your face on us, O Lord." We are blessed that we do see so many good things: for them we gave thanks last week. But the psalmist knew that not all the good things this world has to offer would completely satisfy him—only looking on the face of God would fulfill him. Every other good, every other joy fades away and leaves us wanting more. Eventually even our capacity for joy gives way in sickness and death.

So when Christ came into the world announcing "I am the light of the world; anyone who follows me will not be walking in the dark; he will have the light of life," people listened. As Saint John had already said at the beginning of his Gospel, "In him was life, and the life was the light of men, a light that shines in the dark, a light that darkness could not overpower." People follow Christ because they crave the light of life, eternal life, and they know that he brings it.

Christ our light is the risen Christ who dwells with us and supports us. The psalmist was able to say: with the Lord as his light and his salvation, whom would he fear? The world held no terrors for him. This conviction is what made Saint Laurence say as he was roasting on the gridiron: My night has no darkness, but everything shines with light. Christ is like an interior sun who illuminates the whole world for us. With him as our light we see the world in an ever new way,



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we see it as he sees it, with love for every human being, including those who are different from us or even hostile to us.

Our task is to remember the light that is shining in us and for us, sometimes behind the clouds, to rely on him and to invoke his help, to practice seeing ourselves and the world as he does, with appreciation, respect, thanksgiving and a willingness to serve. The world is a dark place for many people. Christians have the duty and privilege of bringing light to these people. Christ not only claimed to be the light of the world, he said to his disciples: "You are the light of the world," that is, through our faith in him we bring courage and meaning and life to those in darkness.

This Eucharist, in which we are nourished on the life of the risen Christ, gives us the strength to carry out this Christian vocation. When we celebrate the Mass, In the words of the psalmist, "We feast on the riches of your house and drink from the stream of your delight. For in you is the source of life, and in your light we see light."

Advent is the season to long for the light and to ask God to make the light of his Son radiate in us.