



OUR LADY OF  
**LOURDES**  
CATHOLIC PARISH

# THE **LOURDES** **WORD**

**SUMMER 2024**



## Summer Theme "Sight"

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The Lourdes Word  
Summer 2024  
[www.ollindy.org](http://www.ollindy.org)

## Far-Sighted

by *Bruce Oertel*

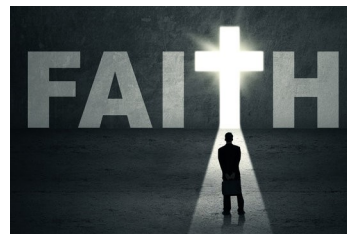
To say I am near-sighted is an understatement. I've worn glasses since the 7th grade. To this day, I vividly remember putting on my new glasses and seeing the breathtaking multitude of stars in the night sky for the first time. Is it any different to say I am short-sighted? I tend to see only what is right in front of me: a phone screen, the TV, a computer, food, FOOD, my spouse, our children. Isn't it ironic that we don't see that which is most prominent and ever present within our sight -- our own shortcomings. We don't see our impatience, our envy, or our self-centeredness just to name a very few. We live our lives truly short-sighted.

Christ is far-sighted. He sees the eternal. He sees the long view. So often He spoke to His disciples of events beyond their sight. They wanted Jesus to address what was in front of them: the Pharisees, the leper, Romans. He usually answered them in the context of His future death and resurrection. He was far-sighted and

looked to His Father's eternal plan for us all.

When Jesus appeared for the third time since His resurrection, the disciples were fishing in a boat offshore. They saw Jesus standing on the beach but did not recognize Him. He called to them to cast their nets on the other side, and they then recognized it was their Lord. Their nets were so filled with fish they nearly sank the boat. When the disciples looked to the far shore instead of focusing on their failed empty nets, they eventually recognized and followed the call of Jesus.

God has great things waiting for us if we are willing to look beyond our short-sighted view of life. Are you looking to the far horizon to your eternal destiny? Is Christ calling you from the far shore but you're not looking for Him? When I was in 7th grade, I saw the stars for the first time; it was life-changing. Look for God and His eternal love for us on the far horizon; it will be life-changing.



# See as God Sees

by Andrea Fleak

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I remember sitting in my 8th grade classroom listening to the pastor of the parish teach the class. He would teach the 8th graders theology periodically. Looking back, I have forgotten much of what he taught then except for one thing: The greatest human desire is to know and be known, to love and be loved. In other words, we are created for community (to know others and be known by them), and we want to be loved and want to give love in return.

Community -- how do we see ourselves and others within the community? I think so often how we see ourselves and how we see those around us is defined by what we do, our job. So much of our life is focused on it from an early age. We often ask kids, "what do you want to be when you grow up?"



When it comes to ourselves, how often do introductions start with name and occupation; we define who we are by our job or what we have accomplished. We see our worth based on our work and what we can contribute to those around us, and at times as we look out at those around us, we often find ourselves seeing others in that way, too. We see how people can be of help to us. We forget that we were created to know and be known, to love and be loved.

A few years ago, I read the "Totally Yours" prayer written by St. Maximilian Kolbe and prayed by Saint Pope John Paul II. It in part reads: "Live in me. Act in me. Speak in and through me. Think your thoughts in my mind. Love, through my heart." It is beautiful just reading it, but when I actually stop to think about what it means, I found myself adding another line to the prayer, "help me to see as you see and love how you love." How does God see us? I think of the story of the Prodigal Son and how the father showed mercy and compassion to the son even when he had messed up. He was not judging but loving unconditionally.

This is how I like to think that God sees us. So, if I am going to see as God sees, then I am also being called to look at others not with judgment but with compassion, patience, and understanding and to love them unconditionally. I am called to see them not for whatever job they have or what they can do for me, but as God's beloved. And when I see myself, I am called to see more than my job title, productivity for the day and accomplishments, but also to see that I am God's beloved and that I need to give myself the same compassion and patience I am giving others.

This life can be hard at times, but we can make it a little better when we choose to see the world in a different way, in God's way. After all, in the end, we all desire the same things -- to know and be known, to love and be loved.



# For We Walk by Faith, Not by Sight

II Corinthians 5:7

by Gabrielle Shufeldt

Lance: "Starting walk, headed to Shortridge."

Gabrielle: "Getting shoes."

Lance will have walked from the streets of Arlington to Shortridge and halfway back to Kitley by the time I walk from Downey to Kitley. The walk has its rituals both in the sense of its repetitions and in its meaning. It is part of my intent to find the holy in the ordinary.

I use the first stretch of my walk for reflection and meditation, as I wrote in "Praying the Pennsy" in a prior issue of *The Lourdes Word*. In simplifying and downsizing the "stuff of my life," I have reduced my reservoir of spiritual resources, too: a few psalms and Bible verses, several hymns or lines from hymns, the squirrels, robins, and riffing woodpecker -- presence.

Reaching Kitley, I start squinting for shapes in the distance. Then the sun catches the white cane swinging back and forth. I hurry across the road and give a full force yell: "Yo Ho." Lance waves the cane over his head and dances around in circles. Who wouldn't be moved to tears of happiness and gratitude? I say, "Amen."

Prior to losing his eyesight, Lance had been a successful photographer, especially of landscapes. He helped support this artistry by becoming a tanker man on a sea-going tug and barge unit. We have a rich repertoire of stories of people and places to share, but how we want to live today is our main focus. A sustainable environment is Lance's major concern, and he is heavily involved in his IU-PUI program in environmental studies. The University identifies him as one of its top 100 students.



We hug and head to Arlington and do the Arlington-to-Shortridge-and-back stretch together before I head back to Downey and he heads for the bus to class. We will have covered a broad range of topics during our walk: the challenge of the classes, NOVA programs, musicians, baseball scores, astronomy, and which restaurants to try with his partner, Tonya. Ridges in the asphalt, the smell of the walnut trees, and the humming motors at the shampoo plant are place markers. The sounds of the cane hitting the street, warning signs, and the yellow steel dividers are rituals.

Lance asked me to select a photograph from his collection. I chose one with a set of animal tracks through the sand. It is a symbol for the walking we share and an icon of the journey we both understand.



# Seeing and Celebrating

by Kate Cabell

After the terrorist attacks of 9/11, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security cautioned us, “If you see something, say something.” It was more than a slogan; we were being asked to stay alert to any suspicious activity and to report it to law enforcement. September 25th is “National See Something, Say Something,” or “See Say Day.” It is a yearly reminder that we play a key role in protecting ourselves, our loved ones, and our communities, by recognizing and reporting suspicious activity.

I have another take on this. Years ago, a neighbor casually stated that her husband loved Jesus so much, and she gave some examples of how he walked with Jesus every day. I was deeply affected by this. I wasn't used to people openly speaking so intimately of their faith. It made me want to be more open about my own faith life. I, too, love Jesus very much, but did anyone know that about me? I was so affected by my neighbor's pronouncement that I wanted to affect others likewise. I saw something in myself that I wanted to share. I saw something in my neighbor that made me realize that I can play a key role in others coming to Christ.

Recently the See/Say idea presented itself in another light. Our nephew and his wife, along with my sister and our closest friends and family, surprised my husband and me in a grand way. It was the brainchild of my nephew and his wife. They saw something in us

that they felt should be celebrated. For six months, unbeknownst to us, they planned this celebration.

We are still shaking our heads at this honor. We, like others, are just living our lives. We don't really see that anything we do is in any way more special than what they themselves do. But, they did see something so they said something -- loudly!

When sharing the details of this honor with others, we are finding that everyone sees this as something that should be done more often. We agree! This same celebration could be held for the people who held this for us, and for so many more.

My nephew and his wife saw something in us worth celebrating. Everyone at the celebration saw something in their kindness which caused them to ask themselves, whom do I know who has led a life that I should celebrate? Everyone I have told about this has been influenced to ask themselves, who is it who has lived a life worth celebrating, and how can I best let this person know that I see something in them that is worth telling the world of it?

I propose that we broaden our understanding of the words, “If you see something, say something.” Let us include seeing the good in others and celebrating it by speaking of it --loudly!



# Second Sight

by Linda Abner

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The Lourdes Word  
Summer 2024  
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*Why can't they see  
they're doing it wrong,  
Creating a dirge  
instead of a song,*

*Seeking innermost answers  
from fields wide and far,  
Can they not see  
how misguided they are?*

*Why can't he see  
he's missing the point,  
Insisting on keeping  
his nose out of joint.*

*And why can't she see  
how one-sided she is,  
Turning simple relationships  
into a quiz?*

*It seems to me, Lord,  
such an obvious thing,  
But – perhaps my own view  
has been unrelenting.*

*Could it be that my sight is  
slightly askew?  
Pridefully blind as  
I misconstrue?*

*Scales of illusion  
Hindering sight,  
Keeping in darkness  
Your healing light?*

*Forgive, and remove them  
I humbly plea,  
Lord, give me the grace  
To see as you see.*

# Vision and Comprehension

by Mark Hudson

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The word sight can have several meanings or implications. It is usually referred to as the physical sense of seeing. But there are other meanings such as comprehension, or a mental or spiritual perception. I have selected three Gospel passages in which Jesus restores the function of sight. Then I reflect on sight used to describe comprehension. Finally, this article ends with an example of differing comprehension of the same sight.

In Matthew 9, two blind men followed Jesus crying out, “Son of David have pity on us.” They followed Him, and eventually Jesus asked, “Do you believe I can do this?” “Yes, Lord,” they said to Him. Then He touched their eyes and said, “Let it be done for you according to your faith.” And their eyes were opened. Jesus told the man not to tell anyone what occurred. But they went out and spread their good news.

In Mark 8, a blind man is brought to Jesus and begs Jesus to touch him. Jesus led the man outside the village where He placed spittle on his eyes. He asked the man if he could see anything. The man replied, “I see people looking like trees and walking.” Jesus then laid His hands on his eyes a second time, and he saw clearly. His sight was restored, and he could see distinctly. Then He sent the man home telling him not to go into the village.

In several Gospel accounts, the story of Bartimaeus has always been uplifting to me mainly because of his persistence and then his straightforward request. Bartimaeus was a blind beggar in Jericho. Upon hearing that Jesus was walking by, he began crying out, “Jesus, son of David, have pity on me.” The crowd tried silencing Bartimaeus, but he kept calling out. “Son of David, have pity on me.” Jesus stopped and said for him to come forward. He walked to Jesus at which Jesus asked, “What do you want me to do for you?” The blind man replied, “Master, I want to see.” Immediately he could see.

In addition to physical sight, we use the word sight when comprehending something (“Oh, now I see”) or as a phrase to use when we change our mind about any person, place or thing. An example of this is found in the popular song, “Amazing Grace.” The first stanza concludes with a figurative use of words, “I once was lost, but now am found, was blind, but now I see.”

Finally, the physical process of vision entails the eye receiving a particular object and the brain interpreting what has been seen. Two people can “see” the same thing yet their comprehension of what has been “seen” may be very different. The following picture illustrates this. This is Oscar Alberto Martinez Ramirez and his not yet 2-year-old daughter, Valeria. Oscar and his wife traveled over 1000 miles from El Salvador. Oscar and Valeria drowned crossing the Rio Grande. Some may see (interpret) this sight as a man having wanted to make a better life for his family. Others see this as a humanitarian tragedy that happened to someone breaking the law while illegally entering the United States.







*~Parish Mission Statement~*

*We, the faith community of Our Lady of Lourdes Parish, strive to live, share and be Christ in all we do.*



*If you enjoy writing and would like to submit an article, poem, etc., then please see the last page of this publication.*

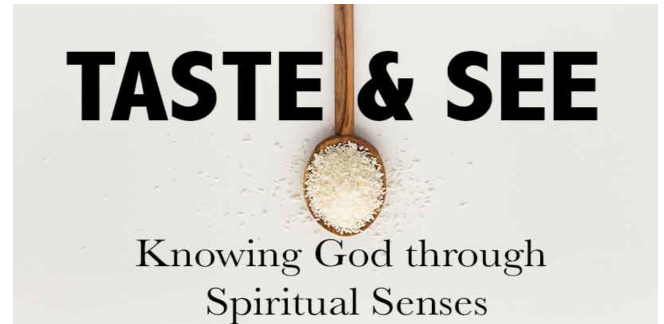
## *On His Blindness*

*When I consider how my light is spent  
Ere half my days in this dark world and wide,  
And that one talent which is death to hide  
Lodg'd with me useless, though my soul more bent*

*To serve therewith my Maker, and present  
My true account, lest he returning chide,  
"Doth God exact day-labour, light denied?"  
I fondly ask. But Patience, to prevent  
That murmur, soon replies: "God doth not need*

*Either man's work or his own gifts: who best  
Bear his mild yoke, they serve him best. His state  
Is kingly; thousands at his bidding speed  
And post o'er land and ocean without rest:  
They also serve who only stand and wait."*

*by John Milton*





## ~Seeing is Believing~

~Sight is a faculty: seeing is an art.

~What we see depends mainly on what we look for.

~A horizon is nothing save the limit of our sight.

~No matter what happens in life, never lose sight of who you are.

~Never be so focused on what you're looking for that you overlook the thing you actually find.

~Our sight is the most perfect and most delightful of all our senses.

~Sight is about what lies right in front of us. Vision is what lies ahead.

~I don't ask for the sights in front of me to change, only the depth of my seeing.

~One doesn't discover new lands without consenting to lose sight, for a very long time, of the shore.

~Sight is the noblest sense of man.

~Use the Light that dwells within you to regain your natural clarity of sight.

~Sight is something you take for granted until you think you might lose it.

~For my part I know nothing with any certainty, but the sight of the stars makes me dream.

~I awaken today, appreciating everything in sight, and I give thanks.

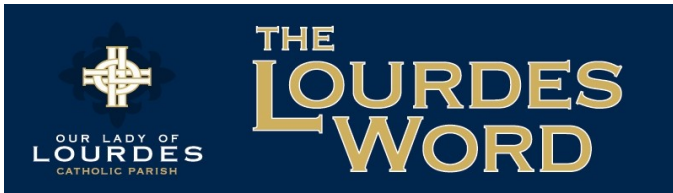
~Out of sight, out of mind.

~In the kingdom of the blind, the one-eyed man is king.

~If I ever see more clearly at one time than at another, the medium through which I see is clearer.

~There is an old saying: If you want to hide the treasure, put it in plain sight...then no one will see it.





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Our quarterly publication of *The Lourdes Word* is an attempt for us, the followers of Christ, to reflect publicly on our faith journey. Each edition has a specific theme. Contained in this issue are reflections on “*Sight.*”



We invite the parishioners of Our Lady of Lourdes to submit writings which they feel will help address the theme of the next publication. All submissions will be reviewed by the publication committee. Please note that due to space requirements, editing may be necessary. Therefore, please limit your submission to 525 words or fewer. The theme for the next edition will be, “*What I Like About Our Lady of Lourdes Parish.*” The edited copy will be returned to the author for review before final publication. Please feel free to submit writings through the parish secretary or to [markchudson@gmail.com](mailto:markchudson@gmail.com).