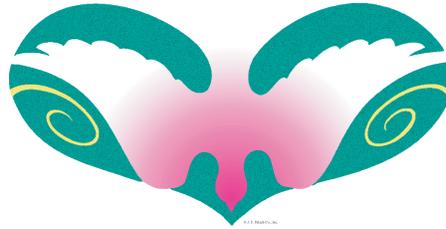




St. Luke the Evangelist Catholic Community

A Message from the Pastor

March 30, 2020



Dear Parishioners,

There is a great deal of scapegoating in our society including amid this pandemic. We witness the prevalence of scapegoating in our Gospel today. The Gospel of the “woman caught in adultery” gives us a glimpse into the divine mind in Jesus who exhibits a merciful love with a new directive: Go and sin no more! But I’m jumping the gun. Let’s imagine the picture as it has been contemplated over the centuries:

- ✓ The woman caught in the *very act of adultery*. Hmm. Where was her partner?
- ✓ Caught in the **ACT**...I assume she was naked as the crowd gathered around her.
- ✓ Her crime: sin of adultery. The verdict: guilty. The punishment: death by stoning.
- ✓ Mercy appears in Jesus’ presence among the pointing fingers and self-righteous anger. He diffuses the scapegoating (again where is her partner...did he run home to his wife?) by turning the anger and blame game on the crowd and their sinfulness.
- ✓ The crowd dissipates as Jesus writes on the ground: Was he writing the sins of those present?
- ✓ The unnamed woman is alone with Jesus. She experienced love and mercy, not judgment.

If each of us is honest with ourselves we would be pointing the finger at ourselves as we have become the judge, jury and executioner of others many times in our lives. This is what Jesus the Merciful One wants us to work on this Lent. He is not sitting in judgment, but **HE IS** sitting with us in our nakedness, embarrassment and dirtiness of our sinful choices. He is mercy. He is love. He washes us clean by His sacrifice, His words and His Presence.

May these weeks of sitting with ourselves allow us to imagine that the waters made holy by the Holy Spirit and streaming with Divine Grace cover us with the compassionate love of our Creator who lifts us up and beckons us to continue the journey home.

Our journey continues as we enter week three of social distancing and confinement. It is weighing upon all of us. Let us remember each other in prayer throughout each day. May we lift those who are serving us in the medical and first responder professions. May we remember those driving the food delivery vehicles to stores to restock shelves and those frontline workers in our markets. May we be awakened to all those who serve in their own way on the frontlines of every profession and those that serve in the rear supporting their efforts. May God bless us this day and always as we grow in appreciation of our faith, our freedoms, and our families and friends.

Know of your priests’ daily prayers for you as we journey together, but apart.

Please visit our Parish Website for continued COVID-19 information related to parish activities and previous e-communications: <http://stluketemplecity.org/covid-19-notice>.

Blessings my friends,

Fr. Mark