

A CALL TO REPENTANCE

The new life received in Christian initiation has not abolished the frailty and weakness of human nature, nor the inclination to sin that tradition calls concupiscence, which remains in the baptized such that with the help of the grace of Christ they may prove themselves in the struggle of Christian life. This is the struggle of conversion directed toward holiness and eternal life to which the Lord never ceases to call us. (CCC 1426)

“When you approach the confessional, know this, that I myself am waiting there for you. I am only hidden by the priest, but I myself act in your soul. Here the misery of the soul meets the God of mercy. Tell souls that from this fount of mercy souls draw graces solely with the vessel of trust. If their trust is great, there is no limit to my generosity.” (St. Faustina, Diary)

John 8:2-11

Early in the morning Jesus arrived again in the temple area, and all the people started coming to him, and he sat down and taught them.

Then the scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in adultery and made her stand in the middle.

They said to him, “Teacher, this woman was caught in the very act of committing adultery.

Now in the law, Moses commanded us to stone such women. So what do you say?”

They said this to test him, so that they could have some charge to bring against him. Jesus bent down and began to write on the ground with his finger.

But when they continued asking him, he straightened up and said to them, “Let the one among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her.”

Again he bent down and wrote on the ground.

And in response, they went away one by one, beginning with the elders. So he was left alone with the woman before him.

Then Jesus straightened up and said to her, “Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?”

She replied, “No one, sir.” Then Jesus said, “Neither do I condemn you. Go, (and) from now on do not sin any more.”

Meditation:

“Jesus sat down and taught them”

Jesus’ teaching sets us free. He is the Truth to conform our lives to, the Way to go to the Father.

“the scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman...”

We can stand before Jesus either as the Woman caught in adultery or the Pharisees.

"...who had been caught in adultery and made her stand in the middle"

The Woman knows she is **guilty**, she is **ashamed** of being caught, she is **afraid** to be judged, she is **alone** in her brokenness. There is a sense of **hopelessness**.

"So what do you say?"

The Pharisees think they are **just**, and therefore they feel **they can judge** the Woman (they have already killed her in their hearts) and Jesus Himself (they question His authority).

"Jesus bent down and began to write on the ground with his finger"

"Those who turn away from Thee shall be written in the earth, for they have forsaken the Lord, the fountain of living water" Jer.17:13

Before Jesus we are all adulterous, because sin is in its very nature adultery.

"Let the one among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her."

"I cannot punish even the greatest sinner if he makes an appeal to my compassion, but on the contrary, I justify him in my unfathomable and inscrutable mercy. Before I come as a just judge, I first open wide the door of my mercy. He who refuses to pass through the door of my mercy must pass through the door of my justice." (St. Faustina, Diary)

How do the Woman and the Pharisee react to Jesus' words?

"they went away one by one"

The Pharisees leave because they do not have the courage to face their own brokenness.

The Woman stays because she doesn't have anything to lose. She is empty enough to receive God's forgiveness.

"Go, (and) from now on do not sin any more."

Jesus' mercy is not a compromise with evil. He commands the Woman to sin no more, and she will be able to do it because of His love's strength. Every temptation is an occasion for good and not for evil.

In this passage there are all the components for a good confession:

- Humility and Contrition
- Openness to receive forgiveness
- Resolution to avoid occasions of sin

There are the fruits of the sacraments:

- Freedom from the slavery of sin: "Go"
- Confidence that with God's strength we can conquer sin

To conquer sin we need to constantly work on our personal conversion (examination of conscience, sincere love for others and acceptance of sufferings)

"In this world you will have trouble, but take courage, I have conquered the world" (John 16:33)

