

Homily for the Fifth Sunday of Lent, Year C

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Today's Gospel presents a story of incredible mercy and forgiveness. The scribes and Pharisees bring before Jesus a woman caught in adultery, seeking to trap Him into condemning her or contradicting the law of Moses. But Jesus, in His infinite wisdom, responds with both justice and compassion: "Let the one among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her."

In these words, Jesus challenges the crowd—and us—to examine our hearts. How often are we quick to judge others, while failing to recognize our own sins? Jesus reminds us that none of us is perfect. We all stand in need of God's grace and forgiveness.

But the story does not end there. When the accusers leave, Jesus turns to the woman and says, "Neither do I condemn you. Go, and from now on do not sin anymore." Here, we see the fullness of God's mercy. Jesus does not condone her sin, but He offers her a fresh start—a chance to turn her life around and walk in holiness.

This encounter invites us to reflect on two key truths:

God's mercy is greater than any sin: No matter how far we may feel from God, His love for us is unchanging. He does not seek to condemn, but to restore and heal. Lent is a time to seek His forgiveness through the sacrament of reconciliation and to experience the freedom of a cleansed heart.

We are called to imitate Christ's mercy: Just as Jesus shows compassion to the woman, we are called to extend mercy to others. This means forgiving those who have wronged us, being patient with the imperfections of others, and striving to build a world where love triumphs over judgment.

As we journey through this final stretch of Lent, let us open our hearts to the transformative power of God's mercy. Let us humbly acknowledge our own need for forgiveness and be instruments of that same mercy to those around us.

May the Lord grant us the grace to leave behind the stones of judgment and embrace the path of love and reconciliation. And may we, like the woman in the Gospel, hear Jesus' words in our hearts: "Neither do I condemn you. Go, and sin no more."

Amen.