Fifth Sunday of Lent — April 3, 2022

From the Desk of Fr. Leo

In the gospel story this weekend, some of the scribes and Pharisees hoped to make Jesus look bad in the eyes of the people. They presented him with the case of a woman they said they had caught in the act of adultery. Just how they managed this apprehension induces the imagination to consider their perversity, and perhaps Jesus himself did not fail to attend to that aspect of the situation. It is possible that it was one of the thoughts in his mind when he said to them, "Let the man among you who has no sin be the first to cast a stone at her."

Of course, their perversity was obvious in the question they proposed to Jesus. It was meant to be a dilemma so that whatever Jesus answered, they hoped to use his statement against him. If Jesus were to indicate that the woman should be released, he would be made to appear in defiance of the law of Moses. If Jesus were to consent to the stoning, he would be made to look like a dissembler who preached forgiveness but did not practice it.

"Let the man among you who has no sin be the first to cast a stone at her." The challenge was such a shock that even the scribes and the Pharisees did not have sufficient hypocrisy to pretend innocence. The words of Jesus must not be interpreted as indifference to sin. His point was simply that they had no right to judge and condemn a fellow human being, both because of their own sinfulness and because they could not possibly see into the heart of the woman. And his refusal to condemn the woman himself does not mean that he condoned her sin. He did know what was in her heart and he saw here the spark of repentance. He put into words for the woman what her repentance should be: "From now on, avoid this sin." Jesus was understanding and forgiving, while the scribes and the Pharisees were self-righteous in their condemnation of the woman.

One thing we should learn from this gospel is that we must not judge others. In the news media we hear many horrible things about the evils people are guilty of. Though we realize that while condemning the sin, we are not the ones to condemn the sinners, we usually find it pretty hard not to sit in harsh judgment on others. Maybe that is one reason we have some fear about the judgment we will receive from God. Perhaps subconsciously we project upon God our own manner of judging. In one sense we ourselves are a foil to God.

More importantly, what we should learn from this gospel is to be overjoyed that it is God who will judge us and not one of our fellow human beings. Jesus reveals to us that God is infinitely more understanding and forgiving than human beings could ever possibly be. He sees the temptations to which we are subject. He understands the weakness of our human condition. And he knows the secret workings of the human heart.

Fr. Leo Alban Asuncion

Mass Intentions for the Week

Tues.	**April 5**	**11:00AM**
Solomon Lacsina Jr.		Val & Dolly
Wed.	**April 6**	**11:00AM**
Thanksgiving		Ed & Mae
Thur.	**April 7**	**11:00AM**
Thanksgiving		Sevidal Family
Fri.	**April 8**	**11:00AM**
Neil Desmond †		Bill & Diane Thomas
Sat.	**April 9**	**4:30PM**
Johanna Ochinero†		ICF #14
Sun.	**April 10**	**9:00AM**
Carlo Lacsina (birthday)		Lacsina Family
Port Costa		**11:00AM**
People of the Parish		

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