



April 6, 2025

Fifth Sunday of Lent

Written by
THE
FAITHFUL
DISCIPLE

Is 43:16-21 | Phil 3:8-14 | Jn 8:1-11

GROW AS A DISCIPLE | PRAY, STUDY, ENGAGE, SERVE

Today's culture creates and sees constant change, innovation, and novelty at record speeds. But even more astounding than the technological advancements we observe around us is God's power to inspire interior transformation in each individual life. In today's Gospel, instead of condemning the woman caught in adultery whose punishment was certain death, Jesus speaks words of mercy, forgiveness, and life. Their encounter lifts the woman out of the shame of her sin, restores her dignity, and strengthens her to "Go, and from now on do not sin any more." This woman, whom others saw as hopeless, is transformed because Jesus' mercy has touched her soul. Long before, the prophet Isaiah had alluded to this time in which the Messiah would bring new life even in the most desolate places: "See, I am doing something new! Now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? In the desert I make a way, in the wasteland, rivers." God constantly calls us to leave sin behind, to keep moving forward - and we can be confident that he is with us at each new step to lead us to himself.

GO EVANGELIZE

PRAYER, INVITATION, WITNESS, ACCOMPANIMENT

How do we take these steps? How do we respond to God's call? In his Letter to the Philippians, Paul speaks of how he willingly gave up everything, even those things which made him righteous according to the laws of the Old Testament, and learned to depend on Jesus and the changing power of his resurrection. For us as for Saint Paul, each step along the path of transformation requires faith in God's ability and intention to heal us and draw us to himself. If we are willing to leave behind old identities and desires, we will see more clearly the true identity God created for us as we begin to live more like Jesus. Paul even describes being "taken possession of by Christ Jesus," because the change is so deep and powerful. For us as for God's chosen people in the readings from Isaiah, at first some parts of the path may look like an aimless desert, but the way will appear with each step of faith, and it is filled with mercy.

PRAY

Transformation doesn't happen all at once. Reflect on your Lenten prayers, fasting, and almsgiving and consider how they've helped to conform your will to God's. How will you be found changed on Easter Sunday? Is there something you can improve upon during these final two weeks of Lent? It's not too late to offer a loving sacrifice to God!