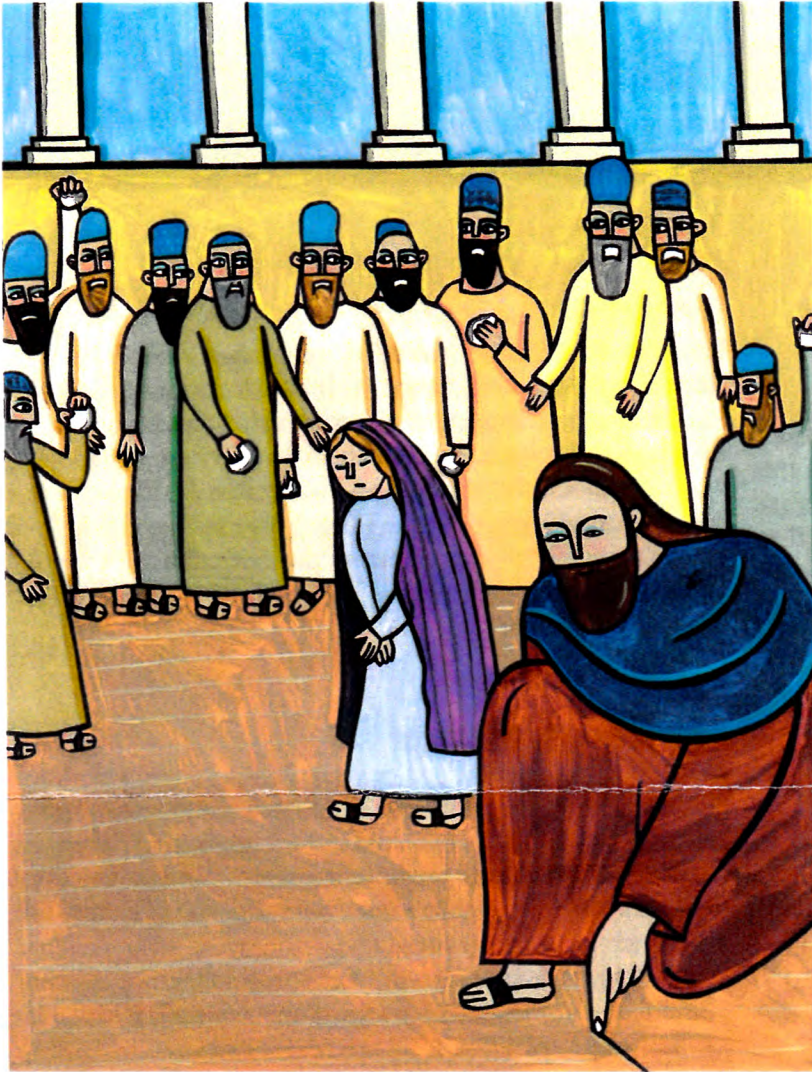


# FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT



## Line in the Sand

Merciful God,  
you lead us  
from the shadow of our shame  
to the light of forgiveness.  
Be with us today as we stand before you  
ready to acknowledge our sinfulness.  
Help us to be open  
to experience the joy  
of your compassion and mercy.  
May we find strength in knowing  
that you are with us,  
always beside us,  
with your love and mercy unending.  
We ask this through Christ our Lord.  
Amen.

Sunday, April 7, 2019

Freed from Sin

*Today's Readings: Isaiah 43:16–21; Psalm 126:1–2, 2–3, 4–5, 6; Philippians 3:8–14; John 8:1–11.* We are all sinners. In today's Gospel, the sin of the woman is the focus of all who gather in the Temple. When the woman is brought before Jesus, the temple crowd wants Jesus to join in their condemnation. Jesus writes in the sand and some believe he spells out the sins of those gathered.

Sometimes sin is known by all, and at other times it is hidden. The crowd walks away in their sin to avoid notoriety. But they also are walking away from the redemption and salvation that Jesus offers. The only one left is the woman and her desire is unknown. Standing face to face

with Jesus in her sin, her dignity and honor are restored. Though she does not request forgiveness, Jesus heals her wounds and invites her to “sin no more.” The path that she was on would have led to her demise sooner or later.

The woman had a choice to listen to Jesus and accept his mercy and live or to ignore him and be destroyed by sin. It is the same choice we have. We can have life with Jesus or we can have death by walking away from him. Jesus offers us life; we only need the courage to accept it. Jesus awaits us in the Sacrament of Reconciliation, where he will forgive our sins and send us forth on a new path of freedom and life.





## THIS WEEK AT HOME

### Monday, April 8

#### The Light of the World

When Jesus says, “I am the light of the world,” he proclaims one of the seven “I am” statements in John’s account of the Gospel. Each “I am” statement explains who Jesus is. Through the Sacrament of Baptism, we come to know that light is stronger than darkness. Prayerfully consider how Jesus is light for you and how you can walk as a child of the light. *Today’s Readings: Daniel 13:1–9, 15–17, 19–30, 33–62; Psalm 23:1–3, 3–4, 5–6; John 8:12–20.*

### Tuesday, April 9

#### Hope in the Lord

With little to eat, the Israelites lost hope in the Lord and grumbled that they left Egypt only to die in the desert. When have you been disappointed and complained to the Lord, blaming him for misfortune? As Lent winds down, take note of how quickly you lose hope when matters do not go your way. Look to people who persevere through trials, relying on the Lord. When you give your troubles to the Lord, pray the refrain from the Responsorial Psalm: O Lord, hear my prayer, and let my cry come to you. *Today’s Readings: Numbers 21:4–9; Psalm 102:2–3, 16–18, 19–21; John 8:21–30.*

### Wednesday, April 10

#### The Truth Will Set You Free

“If you remain in my word . . . the truth will set you free,” Jesus tells those who believe. The Jews did not understand their own bondage, that they were slaves to sin. Jesus’ truth and the Word he proclaims comes to set them free. Let us ponder what binds us today. What holds you captive? Put some time aside to reflect quietly on the Scriptures, allowing God to free you from whatever burden or turmoil you might feel. *Today’s Readings: Daniel 3:14–20, 91–92, 95; Daniel 3:52, 53, 54, 55, 56; John 8:31–42.*

### Thursday, April 11

#### I Will Be Their God

How do you define yourself? Often people identify themselves by their work, station in life, or relationships. The Lord initiated a covenant relationship with Abraham, promising him that he would be the father of a host of nations. God would maintain this covenant with Abraham’s descendants throughout the ages. Do you identify yourself as a child of God? Do you allow your relationship with God to define you? *Today’s Readings: Genesis 17:3–9; Psalm 105:4–5, 6–7, 8–9; John 8:51–59.*

### Friday, April 12

#### My Rock of Refuge

Jesus stood his ground and confronted the Jews when they picked up rocks to stone him. The Jews want to arrest Jesus because they believe his words to be blasphemy. They are critical of his relationship with the Father. Can you identify with the Jews? Has there been a time when fear, jealousy, or a moment of anger brought you to wrongfully accuse another? In these final days of Lent, trust in the Lord as your refuge and your shield. *Today’s Readings: Jeremiah 20:10–13; Psalm 18:2–3, 3–4, 5–6, 7; John 10:31–42.*

### Saturday, April 13

#### Complacent Hearts

In today’s Gospel, we hear the Jewish leaders voice concern that their land will be taken if people believe in Jesus. They have been safe and secure in their way of life. As you prepare to enter Holy Week, consider how you may be similar to the Sanhedrin. Are there ways that you have become too comfortable and not allowed the Word of God to penetrate your hearts? Have you allowed the Gospel to challenge you this Lent? Determine how you can put a priority on participating in the liturgy during Holy Week. *Today’s Readings: Ezekiel 37:21–28; Jeremiah 31:10, 11, 12–13; John 11:45–57.*

