

HOMILY FOR THE 5TH SUNDAY OF LENT, YEAR C, 4/6/2025

THEME: JESUS CAME TO SAVE US AND NOT TO CONDEMN US.

John 3:17: "God did not send his son into the world to condemn the world but that the world may be saved through him." Ez.18:32 "I take no pleasure in the death of a sinner rather let him repent and live."

In today's gospel Jesus said to the woman caught in adultery, "I do not condemn you. Go but sin no more." Jesus has not come to condemn us. He gives us new opportunities when we go wrong. He knows how vulnerable we are to sin. He knows the challenges/temptations we face every day in our lives. His mission is to save us and not to condemn us. He is merciful and compassionate. He came that we may have life to the full. He forgives our sins. At the sacrament of reconciliation, he tells us: your sins are forgiven; go and sin no more.

In the letter to the Hebrews 8:12 God said, "For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more." God forgives and does not keep records of our wrong doings. He wants us to avoid our past mistakes and live life of grace always. He is interested in the effort we make towards pleasing him. He is not interested in our past sins/mistakes.

Since God does not condemn us, we should also not condemn others for we are all sinners. Jesus told the pharisees and scribes who brought the woman for stoning: Let the one among you who has no sin be the first to throw stone at her. None could come forward. They realised they were all sinners some even worse than the woman. Romans 3:23 "All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." We are all in need of God's mercy and forgiveness. No one is righteous and we should not claim self-righteousness.

Again, since God does not condemn us, we should also not condemn ourselves. What God wants from us is repentance and change of attitude and not self-condemnation. I say this because sometimes we are hunted by our past mistakes, and we engage in endless self- condemnation, regret, self-blame and self-beating. That is the work of the devil. The devil wants to keep us sorrowful and in pains and that's why he keeps reminding us of our ugly past, reminding us of our mistakes. But God wants us to be happy. Romans 8:1 "There is no condemnation for those who are in Christ." 2Cor 5:17 "When someone is in Christ, he is a new creation. Old things have passed away, new life has begun."

That is why in today's first reading (Isaiah.43) God said through prophet Isaiah: "Remember not the events of the past, the things of long ago consider not; see, I am doing something new. In the desert I make a way, in the wasteland, rivers flow." This tells us that our negative past is in the hands of God. God is doing something new in our lives. He is restoring our hopes. He is increasing his grace and mercy in us, giving us a reason to be happy. He is making a way where there is no way, opening new doors of prosperity and success for you.

We should therefore get our minds off our negative past and concentrate on the blessings of God in the present. Today's psalmist (Ps.126) said: The Lord has done great things for us; we are filled with joy. Think more of the goodness of the Lord in your life. Think more of his blessings. Be grateful and you will be filled with joy. Jer. 31:3 God said, "I have always loved you and I continue to show my constant love to you."

So, relying on God's love, mercy, compassion and forgiveness, let us continue to make effort, to pursue our goal which is eternal life that God the Father promised us.