

HOMILY – GOD'S FORGIVENESS - 13 MARCH 2016 - LENT 5th SUNDAY

Today in our 'Mass', as we prepare for Easter, we reflect on the Gospel message.

Firstly, of the woman who has sinned - the man is not there, only the woman - and it is stacked against her, as she is alone.

They are USING her to trap Jesus.

We ponder how do we sin? What do we sin?

We ponder how do WE USE PEOPLE - even if they are in the wrong – how do we use others?

In this particular Gospel, when someone is in the wrong,

DO we continue to nag them - saying, "I told you so" repeatedly, and not forgiving them.

In the Gospel scene the people are there in full view and, according to the culture of the day, if Jesus keeps them in continual eye contact, then there is going to be conflict.

Instead Jesus looks down; giving the people gathered a chance to move away.

God gives us the chance to ask for forgiveness.

The people do not take this chance to move away.

So Jesus looks up, speaks to them and puts it back to THEIR SIN first.

According to their culture, for the younger people to move away, they would need the elders to move away first.

What does Jesus do?

He looks down again, as He is sensitive to their culture.

He has challenged them and gives them a way to go.

The second time Jesus looks up and this time, only the woman is there.

How many times does God continue to invite us to ask for forgiveness?

And to change our lives in whatever way we celebrate today.

Today, here in church in prayer, we celebrate and remember the Gospel of last week of the OLDER son who is self-righteous and resentful,
and the YOUNGER prodigal son who returns from a life of sin,
and the FATHER'S love for them both.

We don't hear in the Gospel parable what happens next.

Does the older son go with the father to the celebration for the younger 'lost' son?

Do they reconcile with each other???

We are to guess.

More than that, we are to ACT, to ask God to FORGIVE us, to RECONCILE, to CELEBRATE God's loving invitation, to SHARE God's joy.

When?

Right now in this Eucharist.

The WOMAN in today's Gospel has been forgiven and told to sin no more.

Jesus invites us to be open to forgiveness, and tells us to sin no more.

We come before God and We PRAY...

Loving God, for when we find it hard to forgive someone, help us.

Lord hear us.

Lord hear our prayer.

For anyone who has not yet forgiven us, we pray God's intercession to grace them to forgive us.

Lord hear us.

Lord hear our prayer.

[Fr. Gerry Hefferan – Homily – God's Forgiveness - 13 March 2016]

[Readings: <http://www.usccb.org/bible/readings/031316-fifth-sunday-lent.cfm>]