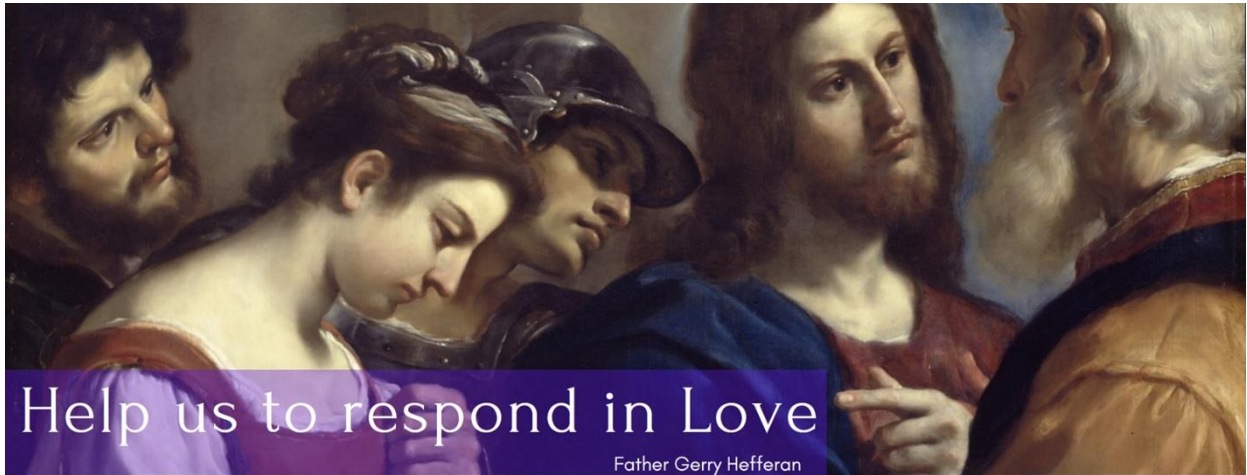


## HELP US TO RESPOND IN LOVE

5<sup>th</sup> SUNDAY OF LENT – 3 APRIL 2022



*Christ with the Woman Taken in Adultery, by Guercino, 1621*

### GOSPEL OF JOHN

In today's Gospel passage, we hear of a woman who had sinned – caught in the act.

A man had also sinned.

But this particular group of male leaders were being sexist, manipulative and violent.

The man was not brought forward, only the woman – and it was stacked against her.

The authorities used her to set another trap for Jesus.

Jesus interceded for her as

- he defended her,
- forgave her
- and freed her.

Think of a time you have felt trapped.

Remember your feelings and thoughts, frustrations and doubts.

**[pause]**

You are invited to read the Gospel passage very slowly,

pausing after each sentence for a while.

Let the grace flow over you.

Imagine yourself there before the authorities, and the crowd.

Alone before them.

Having heard that the authorities want you punished and killed.

**Yet Jesus is there to intercede for you.**

**As you listen to his words, be still and open your heart  
to the grace of God flowing over you.**

***'Let anyone among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her.'***

*And once again he bent down and wrote on the ground.*

*When they heard it, they went away, one by one, beginning with the elders;  
and Jesus was left alone with the woman standing before him.*

*Jesus straightened up and said to her,  
'Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?'*  
*She said, 'No one, sir.'*  
*And Jesus said,  
'Neither do I condemn you.  
Go your way, and from now on do not sin again.'*

Jesus has freed her and sends her on her way.  
Jesus frees us and sends on his mission.

God continues to invite us to ask for forgiveness.  
When God forgives us, it is not for us to just wander away.  
God **sends** us on our way, to **live** our mission as followers of Jesus.

Jesus **invites** us to be open to forgiveness and tells us to sin no more.  
We come before God and we pray.

#### PRAYER FOR OUR LENTEN JOURNEY –2022

*Loving God, we ask your help.*

We can feel trapped and overwhelmed  
with so much happening in our world.

- Recovery from floods
- The COVID Pandemic
- Ongoing Russian terrorist attacks on Ukraine
- Managing our budgets
- Health concerns for our aged care facilities
- Sexism and racism in Australian society
- Responsibility for caring for the earth, our common home.

We place them before you in prayer.

*Help us to respond in love.*

*Loving God, we ask your help.*

There is so much happening in our personal Lenten journeys.

- When we find it hard to forgive someone, help us to forgive.
- When someone has not yet forgiven us,  
we pray your intercession to grace them to forgive us.
- When we lose our focus during this Lent, reach out to us in love.

We place our lives before you in prayer.

*Help us to respond in love.*

Amen.

Father Gerry

Readings: <https://bible.usccb.org/bible/readings/040322-YearC.cfm>