

Monday of the Fifth Week of Lent

March 10, 2008

Scripture: Daniel 13:41-62; Psalm 23:1-6; John 8:1-11

Reflection:

It is comforting to read today's gospel passage, identifying with the sinful woman and, despite the shame imposed by the religious authorities, experience the love and compassion that Jesus extends. To be accepted with a gentle and understanding admonition to do better touches our hearts and soothes our fault-weary being. Yes, there is comfort in identifying with this woman, well aware as we are of our own sinfulness, yet believing in the love of our compassionate and merciful God.

What about the others in the story? Those who were ready to judge, standing the woman before Jesus, believed they had a right – an obligation – to ensure the exposure and expulsion of sinfulness. Perhaps we should take a closer look at our similarity with those who have stones in their hands, however less comforting this may be. It is the season of Lent, a time to look more deeply inward. Are there times when you and I are the ones with stones in our hands? Does Jesus need to protect someone from our readiness to judge and punish with our words, our actions, or even our thoughts?

I once read “prayer is merciless in discovering us to ourselves.” It is a good time to prayerfully examine ourselves, be aware of the times when we may have stones in our hands, then readily put them down. Offer kindness, understanding, compassion, and comfort to those around us. If Jesus says “Nor do I condemn you,” how much more rightfully should we be saying the same thing?



Suggested Action:

In prayer, examine your relationships with those around you. If any relationship is strained, be honest enough to recognize the “stones” which you may be holding, put them down and ask for the grace to offer compassion and understanding. Wounded and weary, each of us longs for comfort.

Sr. Sarah Landis, IHM
Wilkes Barre, Pennsylvania