



Daily Mass Readings Monday, March 30th, 2020

**Readings: DN 13:1-9,15-17, 19-30, 33-62 or 13:41C-62
Gospel JN 8:1-11**

Reflections from Father Blessing

In today's readings we have two people who are being persecuted for sin. If you know the stories, you might think to yourself that one was justified and the other was not. However, in reality neither persecution was justified. The people were ready to stone both of these women. The scribes and Pharisees wanted Jesus to consent to the stoning as well. Jesus revealed an insight to the mercy of God that was foreign to those who were attached to the law. The mercy of God trumps the law. How difficult it was for those who were steeped in it to accept that!

I wonder if there is a part of each of us that has a difficult time accepting the mercy of God. How many of us heap up guilt upon ourselves for the sins we have committed? Maybe we have a hard time allowing ourselves to feel God's compassion and mercy.

That is why the sacrament of reconciliation is such a great gift. We have the ability to experience forgiveness in a way that no other faith allows. I believe that this sacrament, which is most difficult for so many, is one of the church's greatest treasures. We have the ability to experience forgiveness in a way that the woman caught in adultery did. We get to hear the words of absolution.

I think the reason many of us do love this sacrament is because we need to hear those words of forgiveness, reassuring us of God's mercy. The act of adultery brought with it a lot of shame. Can you imagine the guilt this woman felt? In her sin, she was always left with the idea, 'my sin warrants death.' How difficult it must have been for her to go through life like that. Maybe she went to bed at night praying that God would forgive her, and maybe even felt like He did. However, I contend that even if she did, there was no experience like lying at the feet of Jesus and hearing him say, "Neither do I condemn you. Go, and from now on do not sin any more."

I know there are those among us who long to celebrate this sacrament and I am working on a way for you to be able to do so. I long to provide it to you! In the meantime maybe these words from the catechism will help you find solace:

Where the individual faithful find themselves in the painful impossibility of receiving sacramental absolution, it should be remembered that perfect contrition, coming from the love of God, beloved above all things, expressed by a sincere request for forgiveness (that which the penitent is at present able to express) and accompanied by *votum confessionis*, that is, by the firm resolution to have recourse, as soon as possible, to sacramental confession, obtains forgiveness of sins, even mortal ones (cf. CCC, no. 1452).

