

# FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT



## An Inward Gaze

Loving and merciful God,  
you are steadfast and unwavering  
in drawing us to yourself.  
Hold us in mercy  
as we look within  
and discover how we need to change.

Give us the courage  
to eliminate all judgment from our hearts.  
Grant us the grace  
to continue moving toward  
what lies ahead, being one with you.  
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

**Sunday, April 3, 2022**

## No Judgment, Know Jesus



*Today's readings: Isaiah 43:16–21; Psalm 126:1–2, 2–3, 4–5, 6; Philippians 3:8–14; John 8:1–11.* Jesus' lesson to the crowd early in the morning changed when a woman was brought before him. Placing the woman in the middle of the crowd, the Pharisees tested Jesus by stating the charge of adultery and the punishment: "Now in the law, Moses commanded us to stone such women. So what do you say?"

The few words Jesus used, along with his actions, taught the crowd about withholding judgment and showing compassion. Challenging the Pharisees to look within themselves, Jesus responded: "Let the one among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her." To the woman, he showed compassion and support, telling her, "Neither do I

condemn you. Go, and from now on do not sin anymore." Those who tried to entrap the Lord left one by one. The woman was able to walk away with her dignity restored.

God may work in unexpected ways but always acts with justice and compassion. Even in the desert, in a difficult relationship, in the middle of struggle and distress, God can make a way for us that leads to joy and fulfillment. Jesus invites us to look within and make needed changes so that we grow in holiness and steadfast faith. As followers of Christ, we are to mirror his actions by withholding judgment and acting compassionately.



## THIS WEEK AT HOME

### Monday, April 4 I Know, Do You?

In today's Gospel, Jesus says: "I know where I came from and where I am going." In the first reading, from Daniel, Susanna clearly knows who she is, and stands firm though she knows she will face serious consequences for her righteous decision. As you make your way through the week, notice how you claim your identity as a Christian in your words and actions. *Today's readings: Daniel 13:1-9, 15-17, 19-30, 33-62 or 13:41c-62; Psalm 23:1-3a; 3b-4, 5, 6; John 8:12-20.*

### Tuesday, April 5 He Spoke

Many came to believe because of the way Jesus spoke. He taught with a new authority and he spoke with words rooted in the Father. His direct and assured manner of relating to others attracted followers looking for the truth and repelled those who wanted to remain in power. Does the way you speak attract people to Christianity? *Today's readings: Numbers 21:4-9; Psalm 102:2-3, 16-18, 19-21; John 8:21-30.*

### Wednesday, April 6 Be Set Free

All of us sin, and at some points in our lives, may become slaves to sin. Jesus shares his life with us, sets us free from sin, and invites us to live in the truth. The sacrament of reconciliation allows people to begin anew in freedom each time sins are confessed. Set a time for you and your family to receive this sacrament of healing. *Today's readings: Daniel 3:14-20, 91-92, 95; Daniel 3:52, 53, 54, 55, 56; John 8:31-42.*

### Thursday, April 7 Life in the Covenant

Over and over again, Jesus is challenged by the authorities, and, repeatedly, he shares that he is who he says he is. He is the new covenant, and in him we receive eternal life. The Lord keeps his covenant forever. Journal today about how you keep your side of the covenant with the Lord. Do you attend Mass, pray regularly, offer service, work for justice? *Today's readings: Genesis 17:3-9; Psalm 105:4-5, 6-7, 8-9; John 8:51-59.*

### Friday, April 8 The Lord Is with Us

Long before Jesus gets to Jerusalem and endures his passion, leaders try to trap him and find reasons to arrest him. Jeremiah deals with similar persecution. Even in the darkness of terror and wickedness, God is present with us. Pray the stations of the cross with your parish family, or in your home today. *Today's readings: Jeremiah 20:10-13; Psalm 18:2-3a, 3bc-4, 5-6, 7; John 10:31-42.*

### Saturday, April 9 Where Am I?

Holy Week begins tomorrow. The time has come for Jesus to move toward Jerusalem. Take stock of your Lent so far. Have you made any changes in your life? How is your prayer life as compared to the beginning of this season? Write down several spiritual goals as we step into the most holy of weeks in our tradition. Make plans to set aside time to participate in the services of Holy Thursday, Good Friday, and Holy Saturday. *Today's readings: Ezekiel 37:21-28; Jeremiah 31:10, 11-12abcd, 13; John 11:45-56.*

