

Fifth Monday of Lent – 3/10

"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.'" (John 8:10-11)

Who was this woman caught in adultery? What was her story? Perhaps she was a young woman who weakly gave in to a passionate moment. Perhaps she was a hardened prostitute who was angry at the world for the misfortunes that had come her way, and maybe she had learned to use people just as she had been used. There are hundreds of scenarios that could fit this woman. We do know that she was brought to Jesus because the people wanted Him to take a position concerning her punishment. Jesus would not condemn her and by his actions he forestalled anyone from taking action against her. In the end he simply told her to go her way and to sin no more.

My journey to Easter will not be the same as my neighbor's journey. What lessons I learn during this Lent will be different from anyone else's. This should not come as a surprise to us because we are all destined to go our own way. Just as Jesus told the woman to go her way, we must also go ours. It may seem like an odd journey to my neighbor but it is my journey. My way may take me down some dark roads that frighten me. At times my way will be totally misunderstood by my family and friends. Sometimes these people will see more clearly than I will the troubles that lie ahead if I keep on this path. The way that I have taken to Easter and beyond may be full of successes and smooth sailing or like the woman in today's scripture I might encounter moments of great grief, failure and even the embarrassment of being caught in my sinfulness.

When Jesus sent this woman on her way we don't know where she went. We do know that she went on the way that her life was destined to take her. She may never have seen Jesus again but she took His words with her. She took His gaze that surely penetrated her soul and she took a sense of amazement that this holy man could also be a merciful man. She carried in her spiritual knapsack a full ration of forgiveness. She walked in freedom when she left Jesus and she was given a new sense of direction. She would have to leave her sin behind but she could still go her way. And because of this encounter perhaps she never traveled the road alone again.

Reflection Questions

- 1. What way is Jesus sending me this Lent?*
- 2. What is tripping me on this path?*

*Prayer: Jesus, I am a sinful person who sometimes gets lost along the way.
Forgive my sins and never allow me to stray from Your way
to the Kingdom. Amen.*