

## Fifth Sunday of Lent ~ 3/25

"Jesus bent down and wrote with his finger on the ground. When the scribes and Pharisees kept on questioning Him, Jesus straightened up and said to them, 'Let anyone among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her.' And once again Jesus bent down and wrote on the ground."

(John 8: 6-8)

These verses are part of the scene from John's gospel where the scribes and Pharisees bring a woman caught in adultery before Jesus. They seek to trap Him in His reply to their question about what should be done with her.

Here we find Jesus pausing before answering the question. He bends down and writes on the ground. What He writes is a mystery, but it would seem that He got everyone's attention by doing so. It was important that everyone be attentive to what Jesus was about to say. It was going to be very important that they not be shouting or grumbling amongst themselves. It is vital to the wellbeing of the woman that the crowd is brought under control. Jesus' question must be clearly heard and comprehended. Everyone needed to be focussed so that they really understood correctly and really thought reflectively before responding.

Once everyone was quiet and the situation was under control then Jesus simply suggested that the first person to throw a rock needed to be the person without sin. In this moment of reflective quiet those who had come so self-righteously with the woman in tow had the tables turned upon them. Now they must acknowledge their own sin or bear the ridicule of others who were present.

Jesus then returns to writing on the ground. Again we are left wondering about what He was writing. Perhaps what He writes is not as important as the fact that He did not look out over the crowd. He looked away and allowed each person to come to the realization that he could not throw the first stone.

How often does the Christ inside of each of us want to grab our attention and ask us to think about our own sinfulness before casting a stone at another person? Do we listen to that voice inside or do we find ourselves too busy finding just the right stone to sail toward our neighbor? Do we only hear Jesus when it is already too late, after we have already let someone bear the brunt of our judgement? Reflective souls will hear the question. People who live consciously will drop their stones and walk away.

### *Questions for Reflection*

- 1. Do I think before I judge?*
- 2. How reflective is my living? Am I in too much of a hurry to hear God?*