

Year A 3rd Sunday of Lent Homily Outline

“Come see a man who told me everything I have done.” John 4:29

Jesus came to save us from our sins

1. The Samaritan Woman

You don't have to be a scripture scholar to understand that her life is a mess:

FOR YOU HAVE HAD FIVE HUSBANDS,
AND THE ONE YOU HAVE NOW IS NOT YOUR HUSBAND.

She has somehow had five different husbands – and now she is shackled up with some guy.

IT WAS ABOUT NOON.

A WOMAN OF SAMARIA CAME TO DRAW WATER.

Bonus material:

Yet further, it is clear that Jesus not only loves her, he likes her. He has an evident affection for this loose-living woman with an attitude. He sees her truly, sees into her heart, and sees a heart ready to believe, despite the irregularity of her past life. And he is right about her; she does come to believe very quickly. She is much readier to see and believe the truth of Christ than many learned scribes and Pharisees whose lives were in better outward order.

He unlocked the secrets of her heart, secrets that even she did not know, and he showed her the path to their true fulfillment. He helped her to see what St. Augustine would later chronicle so movingly in his Confessions, that her desire for all those external worldly things, all that coming back again and again to the same well and drawing the same unsatisfying water, was in truth a misplaced desire for God himself, and would never be satisfied until she came to the source of living water. Jesus went through her past with her, not to condemn her for it, but to transform it and make it into a preparation for the life he was now bringing her.

2. HE WILL SAVE HIS PEOPLE FROM THEIR SINS.

What is the effect of sin in our lives? Gospel imagery:

- To the man who is paralyzed, Jesus says, “AS FOR YOU, YOUR SINS ARE FORGIVEN.”
- Blind
- Deaf
- Lame and crippled
- AND A WOMAN AFFLICTED WITH HEMORRHAGES FOR TWELVE YEARS, WHO HAD SPENT HER WHOLE LIVELIHOOD ON DOCTORS AND WAS UNABLE TO BE CURED BY ANYONE
- AND A WOMAN WAS THERE WHO FOR EIGHTEEN YEARS HAD BEEN CRIPPLED BY A SPIRIT; SHE WAS BENT OVER, COMPLETELY INCAPABLE OF STANDING ERECT.
- Leprous – slowly and painfully decaying
- Possessed by demons
- Prodigal son is reduced to wanting to eat with pigs
- Dead

In all these images is the idea that sin cuts us off from life, the world, creation, health, community, family, and God – sin is the experience that isolates us from love – of God and neighbor. That is what our Lord comes to save us from.

CCC 430 Jesus means in Hebrew: "God saves." At the annunciation, the angel Gabriel gave him the name Jesus as his proper name, which expresses both his identity and his mission. Since God alone can forgive sins, it is God who, in Jesus his eternal Son made man, "will save his people from their sins".

Matthew 1:21

SHE WILL BEAR A SON AND YOU ARE TO NAME HIM JESUS, BECAUSE HE WILL SAVE HIS PEOPLE FROM THEIR SINS.

John 1:29

THE NEXT DAY HE SAW JESUS COMING TOWARD HIM AND SAID, "BEHOLD, THE LAMB OF GOD, WHO TAKES AWAY THE SIN OF THE WORLD."

John 8:11 To the woman caught in adultery:

THEN JESUS SAID, "NEITHER DO I CONDEMN YOU. GO, AND FROM NOW ON DO NOT SIN ANYMORE."

1 Peter 2:24-25

HE HIMSELF BORE OUR SINS IN HIS BODY UPON THE CROSS, SO THAT, FREE FROM SIN, WE MIGHT LIVE FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS. BY HIS WOUNDS YOU HAVE BEEN HEALED. FOR YOU HAD GONE ASTRAY LIKE SHEEP, BUT YOU HAVE NOW RETURNED TO THE SHEPHERD AND GUARDIAN OF YOUR SOULS.

As an innocent lamb he merited life for us by his blood which he freely shed. In him God reconciled us to himself and to one another, freeing us from the bondage of the devil and of sin, so that each one of us could say with the apostle: the Son of God 'loved me and gave himself up for me' (Gal 2:20)". – Dominus Iesus #10

Matthew 11:28

COME TO ME ALL YOU WHO LABOR AND ARE BURDENED AND I WILL GIVE YOU REST

3. I don't know that I always experience that freedom and rest

Mk 4:26–27

"THIS IS HOW IT IS WITH THE KINGDOM OF GOD; IT IS AS IF A MAN WERE TO SCATTER SEED ON THE LAND, AND WOULD SLEEP AND RISE NIGHT AND DAY AND THE SEED WOULD SPROUT AND GROW, HE KNOWS NOT HOW.

That's why the Lord gave us Confession to come back to over and over – and we should never allow embarrassment or pride to keep us from Him. To come to realize that my life will always be dependent upon the mercy of Jesus Christ – I will never arrive at the point that I am not always in need of experiencing his mercy.

Conclusion

"FATHER, FORGIVE THEM, THEY KNOW NOT WHAT THEY DO."