



Towards Plenary Council 2020-2021
Fifth Sunday of Lent 2019

See, I am doing a new deed ...





FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT

From the Readings

First Reading: Isaiah 43:18-19. No need to recall the past, no need to think about what was done before. See, I am doing a new deed. Even now it comes to light; can you not see it? Yes, I am making a road in the wilderness, paths in the wilds.

Psalm 125/126:4-5. Deliver us, O Lord, from our bondage as streams in dry land. Those who are sowing in tears will sing when they reap.

Second Reading: Philippians 3:8-9. I believe nothing can happen that will outweigh the supreme advantage of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord ... I am no longer trying for perfection through my own efforts ... but I want only the perfection that comes through faith in Christ, and is from God and based on faith.

Gospel: John 8:3-11. The scribes and Pharisees brought a woman along who had been caught committing adultery ... looking for an accusation to use against him. But Jesus bent down and started writing on the ground with his finger. As they persisted with their questions, he straightened up and said, 'Let the one among you who is guiltless be the first to throw a stone at her.' Then he bent down and continued writing on the ground. When they heard this they went away one by one, beginning with the eldest, until the last one had gone and Jesus was left alone with the woman, who remained in the middle. Jesus again straightened up and said, 'Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?' 'No one, sir,' she replied. 'Neither do I condemn you,' said Jesus. 'Go away, and from this moment sin no more.'

Reflections

Christ is found not in loud and pompous declarations but in humble and fraternal dialogue. He is found less in a truth that is imposed than in a truth that is shared ...

Thomas Merton, 'A Letter to Pablo Cuadra Concerning Giants' in Bridges to Contemplative Living, Seven, 31

As it expands, goodness takes root and develops. If we wish to lead a dignified and fulfilling life, we have to reach out to others and seek their good.

Pope Francis, 'The Joy of the Gospel,' 9

Love always has an aspect of deep compassion that leads to accepting the other person, even when he or she acts differently than I would like.

Pope Francis, 'The Joy of Love,' 92

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Some day, after mastering the winds, the waves, the tides and gravity, we shall harness for God the energies of love, and then, for a second time in the history of the world, man will have discovered fire.

Pierre Teilhard de Chardin



CHRIST AND THE WOMAN TAKEN IN ADULTERY 1644 - REMBRANDT

For Thinking and Talking

1. **From these readings and reflections**, what words, phrases and insights stand out for you?
2. **Imagine** being part of the scene described in the Gospel. Who do you identify with? Jesus? The woman? Her accusers? In your heart, speak with Jesus about your experience.
3. **Remember** a time, in your own experience or that of others, when love and compassion overcame harsh judgement.
4. **Express** a hope or intention for the future.

Prayer

Lord, Jesus Christ,
Son of the Living God,
Comforter of widows,
Washer of feet,

show us how to love as you did:
unconditionally, unilaterally,
without fear or favour,
price, or prejudice.
Give us open hearts
and wise minds
and hands that are worthy
to serve in your name.

In the bearing of another's burdens,
in the sharing of another's pain,
we begin to dance. Amen.

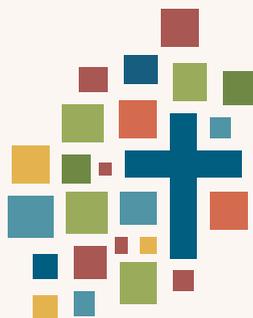
Jim Cotter, Quoted in Sheila Cassidy's *Good Friday People*, 110

For Plenary Council 2020-2021

Come, Holy Spirit of Pentecost.

Come, Holy Spirit of the great South Land.
O God, bless and unite all your people in Australia.
Lead your Church into a hope-filled future,
that we may live the joy of the Gospel,
through Jesus Christ our Lord,
bread for the journey from age to age. Amen.

(From the Plenary Council 2020 Prayer)



THE CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF SANDHURST

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Acknowledgements: Thomas Merton, 'A Letter to Pablo Cuadra Concerning Giants' in *Bridges to Contemplative Living, Seven*, Notre Dame, In: Ave Maria Press, 2011; Pope Francis, 'The Joy of the Gospel' 9; Pope Francis, 'The Joy of Love,' 92; Pierre Teilhard de Chardin in 'The Evolution of Chastity' in *Toward the Future*, 1936, 86-87; Jim Cotter, Quoted in Sheila Cassidy's *Good Friday People*, London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1991,110.