

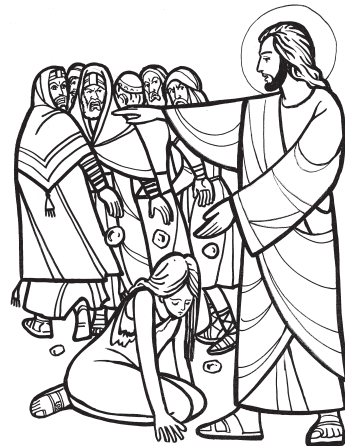


## Straining Forward to What Lies Ahead!

**A**s we proceed in our Lenten pilgrimage, today we are enriched by the unforgettable example of Jesus who offers his forgiveness and restores dignity to the adulterous woman who had been dragged in front of him in shame and fear. The selfless and compassionate act of the Lord reminds us of the hope that is within us, as baptized Christians. That hope, however, was, and is, never just wishful thinking. It is hope that is active, responsible, and committed.

The challenging sentence says it all: "Let the one among you who has no sin be the first to cast a stone." It is not directed only to the hypocritical scribes and Pharisees of two thousand years ago. It is meant also for those among us who easily judge and condemn others. We should never forget that we, too, are frail and sinful, and that we must learn to be merciful if we want to enjoy God's mercy.

It takes effort and good will to be merciful like the Lord. In this Jubilee Year, we follow Paul's counsel for us "pilgrims of hope" ... we strain forward to what lies ahead!



### INTRODUCTORY RITES



#### Entrance Antiphon

*(To be recited only when no Entrance Hymn is sung.)*

**Give me justice, O God, and plead my cause against a nation that is faithless. From the deceitful and cunning rescue me, for you, O God, are my strength.** *(Ps 43:1-2)*

#### Greeting

**P** – In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit!  
**All–Amen!**

**P** –The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be

with you all!

**All–And with your spirit!**

#### Penitential Act

**P** –As we prepare to celebrate the sacred mysteries, let us call to mind our sins and ask the Lord for pardon and strength.  
*(Pause)*

**P** –Lord Jesus, you always do something new for us and the whole world. Lord, have mercy!

**All–Lord, have mercy!**

**P** –Lord Jesus, you call on us to forget the past and strain forward to what lies ahead. Christ, have mercy!

**All–Christ, have mercy!**

**P** –Lord Jesus, you did not come to condemn us, but

you exhort us to avoid sin and work for your Kingdom. Lord, have mercy!

**All–Lord, have mercy!**

**P** –May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life.

**All–Amen!**

#### Collect (Opening Prayer)

**P** –By your help, we beseech you, Lord our God, may we walk eagerly in that same charity with which, out of love for the world, your Son handed himself over to death.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever.

**All–Amen!**

## LITURGY OF THE WORD



**1st Reading** *Is 43:16-21*  
*The prophet Isaiah has words of hope for all his countrymen in exile, as he promises a NEW EXODUS. This fore-shadows the new liberation to be brought about by the New Moses, Jesus Christ.*

**R** –A reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah

Thus says the Lord, who opens a way in the sea and a path in the mighty waters, who leads out chariots and horsemen, a powerful army, till they lie prostrate together, never to rise, snuffed out and quenched like a wick.

Remember not the events of the past, the things of long ago consider not.

See, I am doing something new! Now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? In the desert I make a way, in the wasteland, rivers. Wild beasts honor me, jackals and ostriches, for I put water in the desert and rivers in the wasteland for my chosen people to drink, the people whom I formed for myself, that they might announce my praise.

The Word of the Lord!  
All—Thanks be to God!

**Responsorial Psalm** *Ps 127*

**R** –*The Lord has done great things for us. We are filled with joy!*

*R. M. Velez*



\* When the Lord brought back the captives of Zion, we were like men dreaming. Then our mouth was filled with laughter, and our tongue with rejoicing. **R.**

\* Then they said among the

nations, “The Lord has done great things for them.” The Lord has done great things for us; we are glad indeed. **R.**

\* Restore our fortunes, O Lord, like the torrents in the southern desert. Those that sow in tears shall reap rejoicing. **R.**

\* Although they go forth weeping, carrying the seed to be sown, they shall come back rejoicing, carrying their sheaves. **R.**

**2nd Reading** *Phil 3:8-14*

*In the passage we are about to hear, the Apostle Paul states with enthusiasm the all-important role which Jesus Christ has been having in his life. Such should he also be for all of us.*

**R** –A reading from the Letter of Paul to the Philippians

**Brothers and sisters:**

I consider everything as a loss because of the supreme good of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have accepted the loss of all things and I consider them so much rubbish, that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having any righteousness of my own based on the law but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God, depending on faith, to know him and the power of his resurrection and the sharing of his sufferings by being conformed to his death, if somehow I may attain the resurrection from the dead.

It is not that I have already taken hold of it or have already attained perfect maturity, but I continue my pursuit in the hope that I may possess it, since I have indeed been taken possession of by Christ Jesus. Brothers and sisters, I for my part do not consider myself to have taken possession. Just one thing: forgetting what lies behind but straining forward to what lies ahead, I continue my pursuit toward the goal, the prize of God’s up-

ward calling, in Christ Jesus.

The Word of the Lord!  
All—Thanks be to God!

**Verse before the Gospel**

All—*(Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, King of endless glory!)*

Even now, says the Lord, return to me with your whole heart; for I am gracious and merciful. *(Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, King of endless glory!)*

**Gospel** *Jn 8:1-11*

*A woman caught in adultery seems to offer Jesus’ enemies a good chance to make him say or do something that is clearly against the Law. But Jesus skillfully reverses the situation and forces the plotters to leave shamefacedly.*

**P** –The Lord be with you!  
All—And with your spirit!

**P** –A reading from the holy Gospel according to John  
All—Glory to you, O Lord!

Jesus went to the Mount of Olives. But early in the morning he arrived again in the temple area, and all the people started coming to him, and he sat down and taught them.

Then the scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in adultery and made her stand in the middle.

They said to him, “Teacher, this woman was caught in the very act of committing adultery. Now in the law, Moses commanded us to stone such women. So what do you say?”

They said this to test him, so that they could have some charge to bring against him. Jesus bent down and began to write on the ground with his finger. But when they continued asking him, he straightened up and said to them, “Let the one among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her.”

Again he bent down and wrote on the ground. And in response, they went away one by one, beginning with the elders.

**So he was left alone with the woman before him.**

**Then Jesus straightened up and said to her, "Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?" She replied, "No one, sir." Then Jesus said, "Neither do I condemn you. Go, and from now on, do not sin any more."**

The Gospel of the Lord!  
**All—Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ!**

### Homily

#### Profession of Faith

*(Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed)*

**All—I believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible.**

I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages. God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father; through him all things were made. For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven, *(bow)\* and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man.\** For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate, he suffered death and was buried, and rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.

I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church. I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen!

#### Prayer of the Faithful

**P** –Encouraged by Jesus' mer-

ciful attitude toward the sinful woman, let us present our petitions to him for our own needs and the needs of all mankind:

**All—Merciful Jesus, hear us!**

**C** –For the Church and her leaders: While firmly upholding the moral principles, may they show compassion toward those who fail to live up to those principles. Let us pray!

**R.**

**C** –For all those who struggle to live an upright moral life: May they succeed in overcoming external temptations and their personal moral weakness with the help of God's grace and the support of the Christian community. Let us pray!

**R.**

**C** –For those who have been victims of human passions: May they find in God's mercy and in our compassion the strength they need to rebuild their lives. Let us pray!

**R.**

**C** –For the families and communities victimized by war, particularly in Gaza and Ukraine: May mutual respect, appreciation and solidarity enable them to rebuild their lives, in harmony and peace. Let us pray!

**R.**

**C** –For all political candidates who are running for public office: May they be really determined to serve the country rather than their own personal and familial interests or those of their party and friends. Let us pray!

**R.**

**C** –For all peoples all over the world: That the use of the new technologies will not replace human relationships, will respect the dignity of the person, and will help us face the crises of our times. Let us pray!

**R.**

**P** –Keep us under your protection, Lord, and guide us along the way of compassion and mercy toward our neighbor. You who live and reign for ever and ever.

**All—Amen!**



#### Preparation of the Gifts

**P** –Pray, brethren . . .

**All—May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands, for the praise and glory of his name, for our good and the good of all his holy Church.**

#### Prayer over the Offerings

**P** –Hear us, almighty God, and, having instilled in your servants the teachings of the Christian faith, graciously purify them by the working of this sacrifice.

Through Christ our Lord.

**All—Amen!**

#### Preface of Lent II

**P** –The Lord be with you!

**All—And with your spirit!**

**P** –Lift up your hearts!

**All—We lift them up to the Lord!**

**P** –Let us give thanks to the Lord our God!

**All—It is right and just!**

**P** –It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation, always and everywhere to give you thanks, Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God.

For you have given your children a sacred time for the renewal and purification of their hearts, that, freed from disordered affections, they may so deal with the things of this passing world as to hold rather to the things that last for ever.

And so, with all the Angels and Saints, we praise you, as without end we acclaim:

**All—Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of hosts. Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest!**

**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest!**

#### Memorial Acclamation

**P** –The mystery of faith!

**All—When we eat this Bread and drink this Cup, we proclaim your Death, O Lord, until you come again!**



**All—Our Father . . .**

**P** –Deliver us, Lord . . .

**All**—For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and for ever.

### Sign of Peace

#### Breaking of the Bread

**All**—Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world: have mercy on us. (2×)

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world: grant us peace.

### Communion

**P** —Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who takes away the sins of the world. Blessed are those called to the Supper of the Lamb.  
**All**—Lord, I am not worthy

that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.

### Communion Antiphon

*(To be recited only when no Communion Hymn is sung.)*

**Has no one condemned you, woman? No one, Lord. Neither shall I condemn you. From now on, sin no more.**

*(Jn 8:10-11)*

### Prayer after Communion

**P** —We pray, almighty God, that we may always be counted among the members of Christ, in whose Body and Blood we have communion. Who lives and reigns for ever and ever.  
**All**—Amen!

## CONCLUDING RITES



**P** —The Lord be with you.

**All**—And with your spirit!

**P** —Bow down for the blessing.  
*(Pause)*

—O Lord, bless, your people, who long for the gift of your mercy, and grant that what they desire they may receive by your generous gift.

Through Christ our Lord.

**All**—Amen!

**P** —Go in peace, glorifying the Lord by your life!

**All**—Thanks be to God!

## STRAINING FORWARD TO WHAT LIES AHEAD

*Kalakbay at Katoto*

**G**ratITUDE, they say, is the memory of the heart. Memory, at least in the usual sense, has to do with things past, events gone by, favors completed, and deeds done. A grateful heart remembers with fondness, with joy, with thanksgiving.

**Today's readings, however, go beyond mere "remembrances of things past."** All three, in fact, transcend mere gratefulness, and all three probe deeper into the territory of exultant rejoicing, pretty much in the same tradition of last Sunday's *Laetare* Sunday (4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Lent).

**Wherefore rejoice? Isaiah gives us an opening salvo for reflection: "Remember not the events of the past, the things of long ago consider not; see, I am doing something new!"** Isaiah seems to tell us... No, do not get overly focused on the great things that God has done for you. Do not be merely satisfied with Divinely planned wonders like the escape from Egypt, the miracle of the manna, the abiding presence of God as "cloud by day and fire by night," etc. Although we recognize, as the Israelites, indeed, recognized that "*the Lord has done great things for us; we are filled with joy,*" there is something more ... a great many more surprises are in the offing. St. Paul affirms the need to look

at things from a broader perspective and "*consider everything as loss because of the supreme good of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord.*" If we think we have seen the ultimate, think again; look again; and know that a world of difference exists between mere "rubbish" (the modern equivalent would be more like "shit") and the "*righteousness that comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God.*"

**Gratitude is looking back with satisfaction and appreciation. Exultant rejoicing has to do with looking confidently at what's coming up ahead,** without in any way denying what has gone before. Gratitude, the logical offshoot of a history of favors received, however, takes a back seat to exultation and rejoicing for the coming marvels that "*no eye has seen, nor ear heard.*"

**But Jesus gives us a glimpse of what's coming up ahead ... he makes all things new!** He treats a potential dilemma of a problem in the person of the woman caught in adultery as a powerful way to show that God follows a different set of criteria ... "*God's ways are not man's ways.*" Using what they thought was a perfect case to pin Jesus down, the Pharisees and scribes brought an adulterous



**WORD AND LIFE  
PUBLICATIONS**

Don Bosco Compound, A. Arnaiz Ave. cor. Chino Roces Ave., Makati, Metro Manila

Postal Address: P.O. Box 1820, MCPO, 1258 Makati, Metro Manila, Philippines

Tel. Nos. 8894-5401; 8475-8945 • Website: [www.wordandlife.org](http://www.wordandlife.org)

• E-mail: [wordandlifepublications@gmail.com](mailto:wordandlifepublications@gmail.com) • FB: Word And Life Publications

• Editorial Team: Fr. J. Camaya, Fr. C. Dimaranan, Fr. D. Duya, V. David, R. Molomog, D. Daguio

• Illustrations: A. Sarmiento, B. Cleofe • Circulation: R. Saldua

woman in order to be stoned to death “as the law prescribed.” As the people watched this unfolding drama of “fidelity to the law” with bated breath, a story widely expected to end in a tragedy of soap-opera proportions, Jesus *“bent down and began to write on the ground with his finger.”*

**The self-righteous Pharisees and scribes, following old, cut and dried rules, were trying to “permanently cancel” the adulterous woman, like an unwanted file or a dreaded virus from their moral “hard drive.”**

The world, for decades, has gotten to be “hard wired” for violence and destruction.

Perhaps it is time that we looked closely at the surprises and wondrous deeds the Lord Jesus Christ wrought at the representative of sinful sorrowing humanity – the adulterous woman! I do not know what the Lord wrote on the ground as he bent down while the woman’s accusers stood proud and mighty atop their moral high ground. But I can be certain

of one thing: the Lord was not about ready to write the final chapter of the woman’s life. **Without in any way condoning her sin, nor exonerating the woman, in a marvelously surprising and novel way, Jesus showed compassion with a respectful and loving advice: “Go, and from now on, do not sin anymore.”**

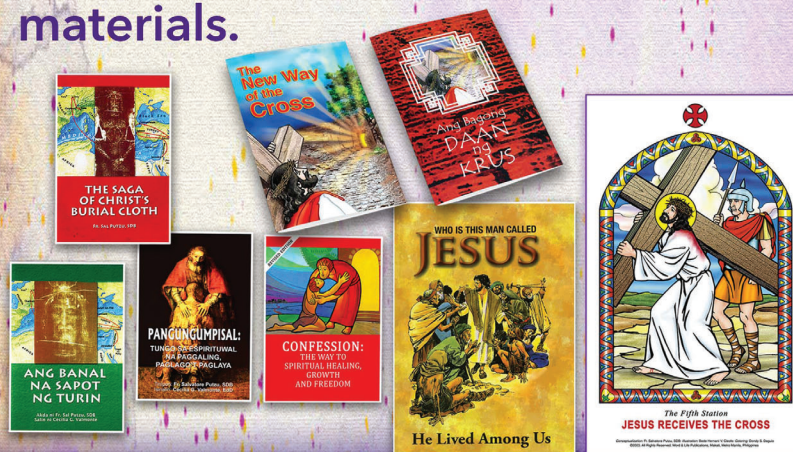
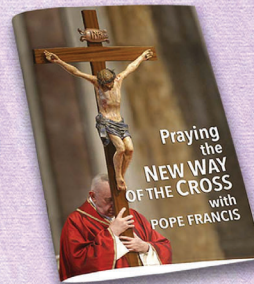
**The Lord was writing his outline for a world of newness, based on a new law, and a new set of criteria and values: the beatitudes, the new commandment of love, the values of a “coming kingdom” that elsewhere in Scripture is portrayed as “new heavens and a new earth ... for the old order has passed away!”**

Dwelling on things past makes for gratitude. Hopeful attachment to the God who continues *“to do great things,” “who makes all things new,”* coupled with our own human, earthly efforts at participating in God’s work by *“straining forward to what lies ahead”* makes for exultant rejoicing.

## LENTEN SEASON 2025



**“Rend your hearts, not your garments, and return to the LORD, your God, For he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, abounding in steadfast love, and relenting in punishment.”** (Joel 2: 13)

**Spend these forty days of Lent more meaningfully with the help of these devotional materials.**



### Word And Life Publications

Don Bosco Compound, A. Arnaiz Ave. cor. Chino Roces Ave., Makati, Philippines  
Tel. Nos. (632) 8894-5401 • 8845-1792 • 8818-8636 • Cell# (63)917-629-5485  
E-mail: [wordandlifepublications@gmail.com](mailto:wordandlifepublications@gmail.com)  
Website: [www.wordandlife.org](http://www.wordandlife.org)

 Word And Life Publications / Word And Life Religious Store  
 [https://shopee.ph/wordandlifereligiousstore\\_2021](https://shopee.ph/wordandlifereligiousstore_2021)  
 <https://www.lazada.com.ph/shop/salitaatbuhaystore>

