



5th Sunday of Lent – Solidarity Sunday

John 8:1-11

The scribes and Pharisees were not pleased with how Jesus broke rules and social norms by reaching out to the excluded to teach a more loving, forgiving, and supportive way of being among his followers. When the Pharisees and scribes came to confront him, Jesus let them argue themselves around while he literally drew in the sand. Whether he was drawing something of meaning or simply doodling is not recorded. He does not engage with them: they came to trap him, not dialogue with him, and he does not play their game.

The scribes were merely using the woman to make a point. She is not considered a person, nor treated with compassion, named or allowed to speak. And that tendency is all too common today. When we make generalizations about groups to advance our own goals; when we ignore the talents, capacities, interests and voices of others; when we treat people as things rather than as equals, we fall into the same trap.

When we, in safe places, talk about migrants and refugees, are we treating them as sisters and brothers?

Let's be clear – no one chooses to leave their home and walk for days, weeks, or months with few supplies, little security, and no certainty that they will be admitted to a safe place unless their life and that of their loved ones are at risk. Are we seeing Christ in each migrant, and treating each person as Christ? Are we treating migrants as if Jesus himself is suffering?

Christ ignores the legalistic trap that the Pharisees describe to him. He addresses their sin, and then treats the woman with dignity, offering compassion and truth. The difference here is that the woman has been caught in Sin and needs to be called and corrected lovingly as Jesus does. People who are forced from their homes are simply seeking survival and a safe future for their families. We are not God, we do not have the right to cast stones. We are to respond with recognition and compassion, and treat all migrants with dignity.

Discussion:

- **Where in our lives do we see people being used as pawns rather than treated with dignity?**
- **What can we do to recognize these people, listen to them, and encounter them?**

Learn some common myths about migration so you can offer truth when prejudice emerges. Visit the video section of our resources at devp.org/lent/resources.

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