



*Drawing by John R Hume,
courtesy of Scotland's Churches Trust*

St Mary Magdalene's Church

7, Glenearn Road, Perth, PH2 0BD

Tel: 01738 643418

Monsignor Charles Hendry - Parish Priest

5th Sunday of Lent, Year C, 13th March 2016

A lesson in Divine Mercy

The Gospel for the fifth Sunday of Lent continues to offer lessons about God's mercy and forgiveness. Last Sunday we heard the Parable of the Prodigal Son from the Gospel of Luke. Today we hear not a parable, but the report from John's Gospel of an encounter among Jesus, the scribes and Pharisees, and a woman caught in adultery.

In John's Gospel, the conflict between Jesus and the scribes and Pharisees occurs much earlier than in the Synoptic Gospels. Jesus' cleansing of the Temple in Jerusalem is reported at the beginning of John's Gospel. Even after this event, Jesus continues to teach in the Temple. After returning to Galilee for a time, Jesus again enters Jerusalem and cures a man on the Sabbath. From this point forward in John's Gospel, the Pharisees are described as making plans for Jesus' arrest and seeking his death.

In the chapter preceding today's Gospel, Jesus was teaching in the Temple area. Feeling threatened by his teaching and his actions, the chief priests and the Pharisees are already sending guards to arrest Jesus. The guards return, however, without arresting Jesus because they have been impressed by his words. Even more

than this, some among the crowds are considering the possibility that Jesus is the Messiah. The chief priests and the Pharisees change their plan. Before making an arrest, they seek to gather more evidence against Jesus by posing a question intended to trap Jesus.

Today's Gospel begins by reporting that Jesus is again teaching the crowds in the vicinity of the Temple. The scribes and the Pharisees approach Jesus, bringing a woman who has been caught in the act of adultery. They put to Jesus the question of what ought to be done in this case.

The Pharisees state clearly that according to the Law of Moses, those caught in the act of adultery were to be stoned to death. Under Roman occupation, however, the Jewish people did not have the authority to execute people; this is cited in John's passion narrative. To answer the Pharisees' question, Jesus must propose an action that will be either contrary to the Law of Moses or contrary to Roman law. The purpose of the question appears to be similar to the question about paying taxes found in Mark 12:13-17. Either answer, yes or no, will support the Pharisees' case against Jesus.

Jesus avoids the trap, however, by offering an answer that was not anticipated by those who posed the question. Jesus, after writing on the ground with his finger, addresses those who stand before him and suggests that the one without sin cast the first stone. Jesus then returns to his writing. This Scripture reading, by the way, is the only evidence we have of Jesus writing. Yet there are no specific details about what he wrote.

We can easily imagine the scene as the Pharisees and the elders disperse, one by one. Jesus has eluded the trap

they had prepared. We might also give credit to the elders and the Pharisees who do not, in the end, claim to be sinless and worthy of passing judgment. These Pharisees are not as self-righteous as the portrait found in the parable of the pharisee and the tax collector (See Luke 18:9-14).

Left alone with the woman, Jesus asks where the accusers have gone. With no one remaining to condemn the woman, Jesus (the one who truly is without sin) sends the woman on her way, refusing to pass judgment on her and exhorting her to avoid future sin.

Jesus' response to those who accuse the woman is more than a caution to us about making judgment of others. It is a profound lesson in divine mercy and forgiveness. As sinners, we are all unworthy to judge the sins of others and we would stand convicted by God for our transgressions. Yet Jesus, the one without sin and thus our judge, offers us who are sinners his mercy and forgiveness. Redeemed by Jesus' compassion, we are sent to sin no more and to live in God's love and peace.

For today's Mass

Responsorial Psalm

Taste and see
that the Lord is good.

Gospel Acclamation

I will leave this place
and go to my father and say:
'Father, I have sinned
against heaven
and against you.'

Stations of the Cross

every Monday
during Lent at 6.30pm

preceded by
Exposition of the
Blessed
Sacrament

for those who wish to pray
from 5.30pm - 6.30pm
in St John's

AROUND PERTH

**Sunday Mass in
St Mary Magdalene's, Craigie**
10am - Sunday
8am - Weekdays
(except Wednesday)
7am - Wednesday

**Sunday Mass in
Our Lady of Lourdes, Letham**
5.30pm (vigil); 11am

**Sunday Mass in
St Mary's, Kinnoull**
10am

Sunday Mass in St John's
6.30pm (vigil); 9am; 11am & 6.30pm

PRAYERS

Please pray for the repose of
the souls of Giuseppe Borzoni,
James & Mary Burke (Dunblane)
and all the faithful departed.

**Eternal rest grant
unto their souls, O Lord.
May they rest in peace. Amen.**

**During Lent
our Saturday
Weekday
Mass will be
celebrated
at 10am**

FEAST DAYS

Thursday 17th March
St Patrick
Bishop

Friday 18th
St Cyril
Bishop, Doctor of the Church

Saturday 19th March
St Joseph
Spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Collection

Thank you for your generosity - last Sunday's collection amounted to £251.

Special collection

The special collection last Sunday in aid of the Papal and Episcopal Charities - including the Scottish Catholic International Aid Fund amounted to £229.75. Thank you for your generosity,

SCIAF Boxes

SCIAF boxes are available in the Church porch for your Lenten Almsgiving - please return them at Mass on Holy Thursday.

Italian Association

During Lent - Stations of the Cross will be followed, in Italian, at 2pm on Saturdays in St John's.

Italian Classes

Italian classes in hall every Saturday from 4.15-6.15pm except for the last Saturday of the month. Open to all - beginners and fluent speakers.

Italian Association

The next meeting of the Italian Association will be on **Saturday 19th March** (as the usual date would have been Holy Saturday).

Meeting at 1pm followed by Mass in Italian at 2pm.

Diamond Jubilee

Congratulations to Sister Madaleine Minogue RSCJ who celebrates the 60th Anniversary of her Profession of Vows.

Reconciliation Service

There will be a Service of Reconciliation on Monday 21st March, at 7pm, in St John's where there will be a number of priests available to hear confessions.

There will be NO STATIONS OF THE CROSS or Exposition during Holy Week.

Services in Holy Week 2016

Monday 21st March
8am, Mass

7pm, Penitential Service
in St John's

Tuesday 22nd March
8am, Mass

Wednesday 23rd March
7am, Mass

7pm - Mass of Chrism
St Andrew's Cathedral, Dundee

Maundy Thursday 24th March
7pm, Last Supper Mass
9pm, Night prayer

Good Friday 25th March
3pm, The Passion of Our Lord
7pm, Stations of the Cross

Holy Saturday, 26th March
(No morning Mass)
8.30pm, Easter
Vigil Mass

Easter Sunday
10am, Mass

STATIONS OF THE CROSS

**Sundays at 3pm
in St Mary Magdalene's
during Lent**

ARE YOU GOING TO BE IN HOSPITAL? DO YOU KNOW OF SOMEONE WHO IS IN HOSPITAL?

Name _____ Hospital _____ Ward _____

Please complete/ tear off and hand it to Mgr Hendry after Mass