

Reflection Monday 5th Week of Lent 2023

Yesterday the raising of Lazarus gave us an image of how sin can cut us off from the world around us, entomb us and bind us in a way that destroys any hope of escape. Jesus set Lazarus free. Today we meet Jesus not ready to condemn or accuse a sinner but telling her to sin no more.

The mercy of God is not just about forgiveness but also about helping free us from our harmful habits. The great paradox of Easter is that on the eve of Easter we sing the *exultet* in which we cry out *Oh Happy Fault*. Jesus came into the world to redeem us from our wrongdoing, our faults and our sins. Jesus would not have needed to come if we were sinless! But Jesus says to us what he said to the woman who stood before him, *Go and sin no more!* Lent is the opportunity to reflect in the sinful habits we have allowed to invade our lives, however small, and work at resolving them. God does not just say *Sin no More* but promises to help us eradicate and heal the wounds that we bare. Wounds take time to heal but Jesus is ready to help us at every step and, as the Stations of the Cross suggest, will pick us up however many times we fall.

Let us pray: O happy and merciful God, may the love of your Son bring us the healing we need.