

## **The Reflection from Pastor Fr. John Carlos, Holy Cross Church, Harrison, NJ, April 3, 2022**

### **NEW LIFE**

In the Gospel, St. John tells us about God's mercy. The style of God, well represented in Jesus, is totally different from the style of the scribes and Pharisees. For these, everything was accusations, murmurings, grudges, envy, legalism, condemnation. Twice Jesus bent down and wrote on the ground. Because they do not want to hear the good news, the message of Jesus, closed their hearts, the Lord writes on the ground! For Jesus, the most important thing is the person: setting free, forgiving, saving. Jesus opposes the arguments of the Pharisees: "Let the one among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her." When they heard these words, they left one after the other, starting with the oldest (this detail is curious, making us think that the oldest are the ones who have sinned the most). The accusers became the accused. Those who condemned the sinful woman to be stoned did so in the name of the Law of Moses, that is, in the name of their faith, of their religion, in the name of God. Today, we are also aware of fanatical, extremist groups that kill in the name of God, in the name of religion, in the name of an alleged divine justice. Obviously, this cannot be accepted. God does not want the sinner to

die, but for him to convert and live. This is evident in the God of Christians (we have this Sunday's gospel as an example), but also in the God of Jews and Muslims (let's not forget that he is the same and only God). True believers of any religion always find in God a source of peace, of love, of forgiveness; never hatred, violence or revenge. Using the name of God to do evil is manipulation to serve and justify other interests. That woman passed from death to life. Thanks to Jesus' forgiveness and mercy, the adulterous woman was saved instead of being condemned. This is, therefore, a beautiful image of the passage from death to life that we are all invited to live, following the teachings of Jesus. Jesus' forgiveness neither relativizes nor is indifferent to evil and sin. Jesus' forgiveness leads to change, to conversion: "Has no one condemned you? Neither do I condemn you. Go, and from now on do not sin any more." In these words, we find new life, renewal, conversion.

Feeling that we are part of the holy People of God, let us joyfully walk this journey of hope.

Father John Carlos

四旬期第五主日 (4/3/2022)

今天是四旬期第五主日。在今天的弥撒中，为候洗者举行第三次考核礼。今天的读经一，上主借先知厄则克

耳的口告诉我们：【我的百姓！当我打开你们的坟墓，把你们从坟墓领出来的时候，你们便承认我是上主。我要把我的神注入你们内，使你们复活。】上主在旧约中已经借先知的口告诉我们：我们一总公义的人在耶稣基督再来时的荣耀中取得肉身的复活，与主共融。

在福音中所有耶稣复活死者的事件中，例如刚死去不久的雅依洛的女儿，即将下葬纳因城寡妇的独生子，但拉匝禄的复活是最具戏剧性的。拉匝禄去世已经四天，且被埋葬了。当时的犹太人相信人死后第四天身体开始腐烂。但基督却让这开始发臭的尸体死而复活。拉匝禄因着耶稣的一声呼喊从坟墓中走出来，只是依然身缠布条，不能自由行走。拉匝禄的复活不仅彰显了耶稣作为天主子的神迹，也预示了耶稣自己在被钉十字架上圣死后三日从死者中复活的奥迹。

耶稣的受难，圣死和复活，让我们的罪过得到赦免，得到新生。耶稣亲自建立圣体圣事，并派遣圣神来到我们中，让我们有机会随时与主亲近，感受到主的临在和接受圣神的带领。这是上主给我们的极大恩宠。四旬期即将结束，我们将进入圣周，在陪伴耶稣一起经历祂的苦难，圣死与复活的奥迹之际，让我们多花些时间祈祷，禁食，并做善功，恳求上主将我们从窒息和压迫我们生命的【坟墓】中领出来，获得新生和自由。