

CONNECT! SUNDAY REFLECTION

5th Sunday of Lent | For Sunday, April 7th, 2019

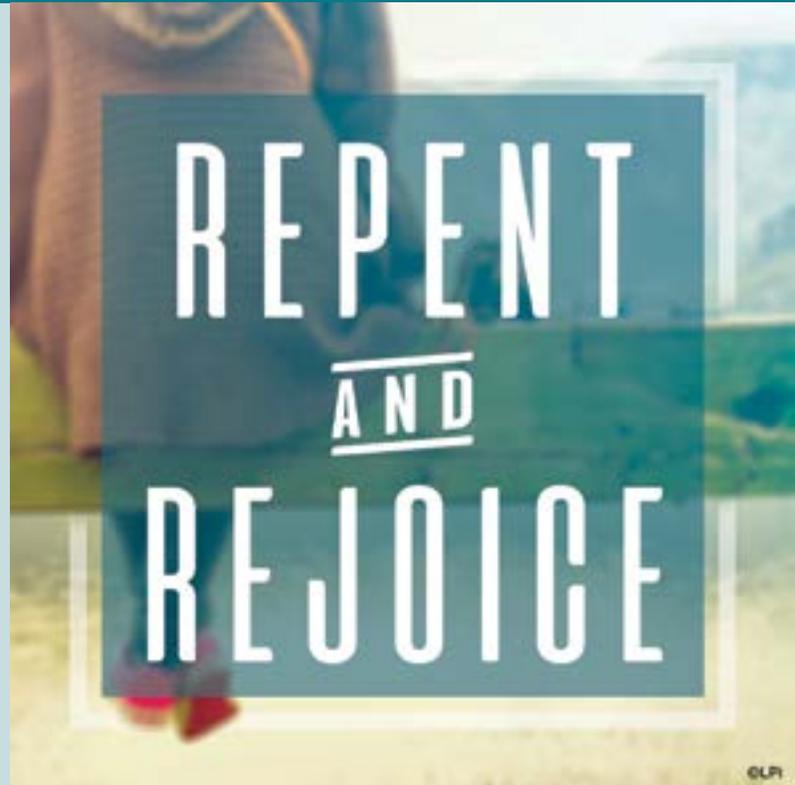
Find Serenity in Jesus

Written by Douglas Sousa, S.T.L.

Isaiah 43:16-21

Philippians 3:8-14

John 8:1-11



It is a scene we have become all too familiar with — people losing everything because of their addiction to drugs. At first, they were introduced to it by friends. At the moment, they liked the feeling of euphoria it gave them. They enjoyed being liberated from their fears and inhibitions.

Before long, they are doing it not for fun but to get through the day. It becomes more than a habit. It becomes a driving need more important than anything else. They are unable to work and lose their livelihood and homes. Eventually, they are abandoned by their family and friends and have nowhere else to go except the streets. Although the drugs promised to bring them friendships, love, and inner peace, they are left with only loneliness, rejection, and destitution.

It's also a story that played itself in [this Sunday's Gospel](#). The young woman wanted nothing more than love and attention. She reveled in the gifts her lover gave her and thrilled to hear him say how beautiful she was. It felt good to be noticed, appreciated, and wanted. Though she knew it was wrong to commit adultery and that the consequences of being caught were severe, she wanted to please her lover.

We all know what happens next. She is caught and dragged to the feet of Jesus. Her lover abandons her. By giving herself to him, she hoped to find love and acceptance. However, all she received was rejection, scorn, and condemnation. Looking for love, she chose sin and found nothing but rejection.

In contrast, it is at the feet of Jesus that this woman finds the love and mercy her heart desperately longed for. Jesus picks her up from the dirt, wipes away her tears, and sends her home with the warning, "Go and sin no more." What she was unable to find by sinning she found in Jesus, who restored her dignity and affirmed her unique value as a daughter of God.

This story does not just take place on the streets of our cities or on the streets of Jerusalem. It also takes place in our lives, in our homes, and in our hearts. We may not be addicted to drugs and alcohol. We may not be committing adultery. However, in many

ways, both large and small, we choose sin over God's love. We fall prey to the false promises of love, pleasure, and inner peace that sin offers us. And in the process, we lose touch with our heavenly Father who is the source of all love.

However, that does not need to be the end of the story. We can always turn to Jesus to find forgiveness.

Consider the woman in the Gospel. Isn't it ironic that if she had never been caught sinning, she might never have met Jesus? Without being dragged to him by the scribes and Pharisees, she would never have experienced how gentle and merciful he was. Because of her weakness, she came to know Jesus more personally than would otherwise be possible.

The same is true for us. It is not until we come to Jesus on our knees, weeping over our sins and seeking relief from our burden of guilt, that we come to know in a personal, heartfelt way just how merciful and loving he is. If we can come to Jesus with humility and sorrow, then our weakness will bring us closer to him. Furthermore, we will come to understand that the only way to find the love and serenity we desire in the depths of our being is in the warm embrace of our heavenly Father.

Douglas Sousa, S.T.L.

To learn more about LPi's services
and publications designed to help
you build a vibrant
parish, please visit our website:

www.4LPi.com
LPi
2875 S. James Drive
New Berlin, WI 53151
(800) 950-9952 ext. 2469

Send email address changes to:
lpiconnections@4LPi.com

To opt out of receiving this
reflection, contact:
lpiconnections@4LPi.com

©2019 LPi
All rights reserved.

PRAYER

Lord,
We seek peace and love
in so many dark places.
We seek them apart from You
and lose ourselves in the process.
We find nothing but rejection,
scorn, and condemnation.
May we turn to You
when we are lonely
and seek You out
when we are sad,
turning our mourning
into rejoicing.
Lead us to the peace and love
we long for.
And when we find it,
help us to share it with others.
Through Christ our Lord,
Amen.