

John 8: 1-11 Woman Caught in Adultery

I was born in Hawthorne, Calif., in January, 1946.

In 1945, Mattel Inc. built it's headquarters in El Segundo, Calif which was about three miles away.

I was absolutely unaware of this fact until 1959 when they debuted "Barbie."

I had two younger sisters who "had to" have one; that's one for each of them.

I can still picture them, not my sisters, but Barbie: skinny, blue eye-shadow, tiny feet and a diagonally striped B&W swim suit.

I wish I had one, a Barbie, now. They are worth \$8,000 today; that's \$27,000 in the original box.

For many years, my mom defeated Mattel's marketing strategy by making all the clothes for my sisters' Barbies. Mattel is now celebrating Barbie's 60th anniversary.

"Imagine, if you will," that your 5 year-old daughter asks for a Barbie "Pad" for her next birthday.

A Barbie "Pad," that could be an RV, a house or even a castle.

Then, you go out and buy the biggest, most-expensive castle made in the world for your daughter's Barbie. You buy all the furniture including a canopy-bed, a grand piano and a gym. You also get a "Mary Kay" pink Cadillac convertible and a jet-ski. You're so excited; you can hardly wait. Your daughter's birthday finally arrives and you see the absolute joy on her face when she opens her gifts. She plays and plays with them for several wonderful hours. Then, you don't see her playing any more and the castle isn't where it had been. You happen to look out the back window and you see your daughter carrying the castle and all her Barbie accessories towards the alley. Then to your absolute, incredible shock, you watch as she throws it all in the dumpster. What! How can she possibly have done that, it doesn't make sense! But, she does have Free Will! How would you feel?

- Well, we did the same thing to God's plans for us, only infinitely worse.
- God thought of us from all eternity, and then...
- God created the "Big Bang" and for 13.8 billion years, He formed the universe.
- 10 billion galaxies, 100 billion stars in each galaxy. That's 10 to the twentieth power or 1 Sextillion stars.
- For the past 4.5 billions years, God formed the Earth for us, in a perfect spot, not too hot and not too cold. It was in the Goldilocks Zone.
- He gave the earth rotation so we would have ocean breezes
- Tilted the earth so we would have seasons.
- There were blue skies, mountains, oceans, seas, lakes and rivers. Fertile soil, trees, flowers, birds, fish, animals and perfect weather.

When everything was perfect, God created us.

- ◆ He created us in His own image and likeness with an intellect and free will.
- ◆ He gave immortal bodies and souls.
- ◆ He gave us impassibility; we would feel no pain, no heat, no cold, no hunger. We wouldn't age. We wouldn't have to work.
- ◆ He gave us infused knowledge. We wouldn't have to go to school
- ◆ He gave us integrity - the total control of our passions.
- ◆ He gave us Sanctifying Grace; a share in His own divinity
- ◆ and He gave us the Garden of Eden.

And in no time at all, we threw it all in the Dumpster!

Adam and Eve were tempted, Satan said, "You can be your own boss and you can decide what is right and what is wrong." They fell for a lie, they drank the grape kool-aid!

They threw everything away and they received nothing from the "Liar" in return.

We lost everything except our immortal souls. And, even our souls lost their place with Our Creator.

What did God do? Did God throw us away as well?

No! Never! God gave us another chance!

God promised us a Savior, the Son of God, born of a woman - a new Adam and Eve.

- God took the gifts we threw away and saved them for later, if, we wanted them.
- Once the human race was saved by the Passion and Death of the Incarnate Son of God, each one of us could now be saved, **if, we will to follow Christ.**

It's our choice, but God the Father and His Son, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit never, ever, stop chasing us down the highways and byways of life, reminding us every moment of Their Love for us.

God is Love; we are the object of that love.

- ◆ **Today's Gospel** is an absolutely wonderful example of **God's Love.**
- ◆ Of God's desire to never give up on a single one of His Beloved children.
- ◆ This Gospel is a beautiful example of God's Mercy
- ◆ **An example of God's Absolute Scandalous Mercy**
- ◆ Of Mercy without limits.

In this Gospel:

- Jesus is teaching in the Temple area during the Feast of Tabernacles.
- The scribes and the Pharisees bring a woman caught in adultery and throw her to the ground very near to where Jesus is standing.
- Adultery was a capital crime - the sentence for which is stoning to death - both for the man and for the woman.
- If they were accused of adultery, there would be an investigation and then a trial.
- But, she was caught in the act, **there is no ambiguity here,**
- The sentence could be carried out immediately.
- Yet, instead they throw her at Jesus' feet.
- The Pharisees and scribes will never, ever, pass up an opportunity to entrap and embarrass Jesus.
- They know the law, but, yet, they ask Jesus, **"So, what do you say?"**
- If Jesus says that they should be merciful, then Jesus is acting against the Mosaic Law, and they would spread that fake news!
- If Jesus says that she should be stoned, then Jesus is not showing mercy, and they would spread that fake news!

- Jesus reads their hearts and intentions.
- Jesus also reads this woman at his feet.
- Jesus knows this woman feels hopeless, ashamed, humiliated and deathly afraid.
- Even if, somehow, she survives, she will be shunned by her friends and family and live in shame.

- ★ Jesus ignores the Pharisees' impertinent and self-serving questions.
- ★ He begins writing in the sand. Whatever it was, it stands them back on their heels.
- ★ **Then Jesus stands and says, "Let the one among you, who is without sin, be the first to throw a stone.**
- ★ Beginning with the elders, they drop their stones and went away one by one.
- ★ Did they realize that their trap failed or did Jesus' words touch their hearts and their consciences.
- ★ Jesus not only doesn't condemn the woman, He gives **her another chance.**
- ★ In His Mercy, He restores her freedom and her dignity.

- ◆ In the movie, “The Passion of the Christ,” the adulterous woman is identified as Mary Magdalene.
- ◆ We know this because at the Scourging, Mary Magdalene is accompanying Mary, the Mother of Jesus.
- ◆ As the scourging ends and the executioners drag Jesus away, Pilate’s wife, who many identify with the woman, Veronica, hands the Blessed Mother several cloths.
- ◆ Mary kneels down where Jesus had been scourged and begins wiping up the pools of Jesus’ Precious Blood with those cloths.
- ◆ At that point Mary Magdalene has a flashback to her first encounter with Jesus;
- ◆ She is the woman caught in adultery.
- ◆ This picture to my left is the scene from the movie. We see Mary cowering on the dusty ground as the angry Pharisees stand ready to stone her.
- ◆ After Jesus challenges the Pharisees and they drop their stones and walk off,
- ◆ Mary Magdalene’s hand reaches out and touches Jesus’ foot. She looks up at Him with **wonder, intense gratitude, and almost disbelief.**
- ◆ **She has been saved.**
- ◆ Jesus reaches down and takes her hand in His, smiles, and lifts her up to a new life.
- ◆ Jesus tells her that He doesn’t condemn her and then says, “Go, and sin no more.”
- ◆ He has shown His Mercy, His Love and has given Mary another chance.
- ◆ As this flashback ends, we see Magdalene back in the courtyard with Our Blessed Mother.
- ◆ Magdalene had removed her head scarf, her veil, which is almost unheard of, and uses it to wipe up Jesus’ blood.
- ◆ Today, the Precious Blood that Mary Magdalene and our Blessed Mother were wiping up should mean as much to us as it does to them.
- ◆ It is the blood of the Savior, Mary Magdalene’s Savior, our Savior, the one who is giving Himself up to death so that He can give all of us, sinners, another chance.

Near the end of a homily it’s normal to end with a suggestion on how to apply the Gospel message to our lives. For instance, it could be to have mercy on others because Jesus had mercy on us.

However, I believe we should focus **all our efforts** on feeling our gratitude to Jesus as the woman in this gospel did.

- ★ Surely, most of us, or all of us, have sinned as bad or even muchworse than she
- ★ and probably much more often than this woman did.
- ★ **and Jesus had mercy on us as well.**
- ★ We have committed sins, sins **that are capital crimes of the soul.**
- ★ Yet, Jesus saved our lives with His own life.

- ★ In our gratitude we should endeavor to become saints like this woman caught in adultery. If she is Mary Magdalene, she is one of the greatest saints in the Church. Mary Magdalene is the only woman saint that I know of who is referred to as an Apostle.
- ★ God is merciful to all of us.
- ★ He remembered each one of us in the Garden of Gethsemene.
- ★ He was condemned for each one of us. He carried the cross, for each one of us. He was crucified for each one of us. He asked His Father to forgive each one of us and He died for each one of us.

In our immense gratitude, all of us should follow Jesus and accompany Jesus during this coming Holy Week just as Mary Magdalene did.