

**Welcome to Holy Mass at Holy Cross Church
5th Sunday of Lent
Passion Sunday**

**Sunday, March 21, 2010
11:00 a.m.**

**Holy Cross Church
3690 Armstrong Road, PO Box 318
Syracuse, NY 13209-0318**

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Intention: +Leona Navatka
Requested by Rick and Maureen Navatka

Intention: +Russell Haberer
Requested by Pat and Steve Zalewski

Healing Intentions: Michelle Mallory Lu Luch
 Martha Shuman Diane Spina
 Lois Bogacki Ruth Matson
 Josephine Wicks Father Marian Pociecha

and all those in need of healing in our parish community

The Liturgy of the Word

Reading I

Isaiah 43: 16-21

A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah

I am doing a new thing and I will give drink to my people.

This says the Lord, who opens a way in the sea
and a path in the mighty waters,
Who leads out chariots and horsemen,
a powerful army,
Till they lie prostrate together, never to rise,
snuffed out and quenched like a wick.
Remember not the events of the past,
the things of long ago consider not;
See, I am doing something new!
Now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?
In the desert I make a way,
in the wasteland, rivers.
Wild beasts honor me,
jackals and ostriches,
For I put water in the desert and rivers
in the wasteland for my chosen people to drink
The people whom I formed for myself,
that they might announce my praise.
This is the Word of the Lord.

Responsorial Psalm

Psalm 126: 1-2, 2-3, 4-5, 6

R: The Lord has done great things for us; we are filled with joy.

When the Lord brought back the captives of Zion, we were like men dreaming. Then our mouth was filled with laughter, and our tongue with rejoicing.

R: The Lord has done great things for us; we are filled with joy.

Then they said among the nations, "the Lord has done great things for them." The Lord has done great things for us; we are glad indeed.

R: The Lord has done great things for us; we are filled with joy.

Restore our fortunes, O Lord, like the torrents in the southern desert. Those that sow in tears shall reap rejoicing.

R: The Lord has done great things for us; we are filled with joy.

Although they go forth weeping, carrying the seed to be sown, They shall come back rejoicing, carrying their sheaves.

R: The Lord has done great things for us; we are filled with joy.

Reading II

Philippians 3: 8-14

A reading from the first letter of Paul to the Philippians

Because of Christ I look upon everything else as useless in order to gain him.

I have come to rate all as loss in light of the surpassing knowledge of my Lord Jesus Christ. For his sake I have forfeited everything; I have accounted all else rubbish so that Christ may be my wealth and I may be in him, not having any justice of my own based on observance of the law. The justice I possess is that which comes through faith in Christ. It has its origin in God and is based on faith. I wish to know Christ and the power flowing from his resurrection; likewise to know how to share in his sufferings by being formed into the pattern of his death. Thus do I hope that I may arrive at resurrection from the dead.

It is not that I have reached it yet, or have already finished my course; but I am racing to grasp the prize if possible, since I have been grasped by Christ [Jesus]. Brothers, I do not think of myself as having reached the finish line. I give no thought to what lies behind but push on to what is ahead. My entire attention is on the finish line as I run toward the prize to which God calls me – life on high in Christ Jesus.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Gospel

John 8: 1-11

A reading of the holy gospel according to John

Let the man without sin be the first to throw a stone.

Jesus went out to the Mount of Olives. At daybreak he reappeared in the temple area; and when the people started coming to him, he sat down and began to teach them. The scribes and the Pharisees led a woman forward who had been caught in adultery. They made her stand in front of everyone. "Teacher," they said to him, "this woman has been caught in the act of adultery. In the law, Moses ordered such women to be stoned. What do you have to say about the case?" (They were posing this question to trap him, so that they could have something to accuse him of.) Jesus simply bent down and started tracing on the ground with his finger. When they persisted in their questioning, he straightened up and said to them, "*Let the man among you who has no sin be the first to cast a stone at her.*" A second time he bent down and wrote on the ground. Then the audience drifted away one by one, leaving him alone with the woman, who continued to stand before him. Jesus finally straightened up again and said to her, "*Woman, where did they all disappear to? Has no one condemned you?*" "No one,

sir," she answered. Jesus said, "*Nor do I condemn you. You may go. But from now on, avoid this sin.*"

This is the gospel of the Lord.

Thoughts from the Pulpit **Mercy and Forgiveness**

[John 8: 1-11]

The Pharisees brought the sinful woman to Jesus. She committed the sin of adultery, and caught, she was about to be stoned to death in fulfillment of Moses' Law.

On the surface there appears to be only one sin: the woman's sin, the sin of adultery. But in reality, there are other sins there as well; equally, if not more serious.

There is the horrible sin in the way the Pharisees treated that woman. They exposed her to the most humiliating public shaming. People have been known to turn to suicide rather than face a public shaming. The Pharisees hadn't the slightest regard for her feelings or for her as a person. She was *a thing* to them, not a person. They used her just to entrap Jesus. She was to them what bait is to fishermen. To use another person in this way is a despicable and ugly thing!

Then there is the sin of hatred. The Pharisees had only one aim – to get rid of Jesus. In other words, they had murder on their minds. So, in this scene there were many sins that been brought to Jesus.

And there is something marvelously gentle and subtle in the way Jesus dealt with all of them. He didn't condemn them. He exposed them but didn't spell it out in public. He didn't even judge them. He invited them to judge themselves. Instead of answering their question, he began to write on the ground (their sins?) He did this in order to give them time to examine their consciences.

To all at the scene, Jesus wanted to give the gift of mercy and forgiveness. All left but the woman. Therefore she was the only recipient of Jesus' gift. "Go in peace, but sin no more!"

Church tradition names that woman Saint Magdalene. She followed Jesus with that gift of mercy, forgiveness, and peace to the end!

'Blessed are the merciful, they will obtain mercy.' Amen.

The Communion

Welcome to participation in the Holy Eucharist. By receiving Holy Communion, the Body and Blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ, we fully participate in the celebration of the Holy Eucharist.

We are encouraged to receive Communion devoutly. In order to be properly disposed to receive Communion, participants should be baptized, should not be conscious of grave sin, and normally should fast for one to two hours. A person who is conscious of grave sin is not to receive Communion without prior Sacramental Confession.

We always welcome our fellow Christians to this celebration of the Holy Eucharist and Holy Communion. We pray that our common Baptism and the action of the Holy Spirit in this Eucharist will draw us closer to one another and begin to dispel the sad divisions separating us.

