

# Conversion of Heart

Lenten Reflections on Mercy and Forgiveness

Week 5

**READINGS:** *Isaiah 43:16–21; Philippians 3:8–14; John 8:1–11*

## We are not alone

Today's Gospel calls to mind the power of community. The woman caught in the act of adultery was persecuted by the mob, thus representing the negative side of communal power. Then, Jesus incites his brilliant gift of reason into the angry mob, and, just like that, they disappear. None remain except the one sinner and her savior, the most powerful community of good that one can attain.

In Christ, we form part of the union of his greater community known as the Communion of Saints. In this group we find great holy members of the Faith like

St. Thérèse and St. John of the Cross as well as lesser-known inhabitants of the heavenly homeland such as deceased family members. Furthermore, this community includes us, the Church Militant, who strive for holiness as we make it through our earthly journey.

The Gospel reminds us that in our times of greatest need Jesus is present. Not only is he present, but so are the rest of his children,

those whom we call saints. May we never forget that such a powerful community for good is constantly in our corner. We need only to call upon them for help.

“Let the one among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her”

(Jn 8:7).



## Family Activity

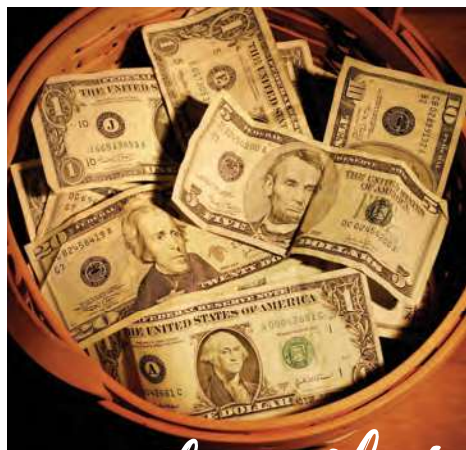
### Memories that last forever

The unity of families is the bedrock of society. Without the fusion of our family bonds, it is harder to learn how to love, serve, and appreciate the loving care of others. This week, do something special to show your family that they are loved. Write them a letter, take them out to eat, or escape on a family fun night. Do something out of the ordinary and create a memory that will last forever.

## For Reflection

- How often do you call on God for spiritual guidance?
- Which saint do you most often ask for intercession?
- With whom do you share your spiritual joys and fears?





## Catechism Chat

“The interior penance of the Christian can be expressed in many and various ways. Scripture and the Fathers insist above all on three forms, fasting, prayer, and almsgiving, which express conversion in relation to oneself, to God, and to others” (1434).

## Fasting TIPS

If you are traveling in the spiritual desert solo, your efforts alone might not be enough to withstand temptations to break your fasting. Find an accountability partner to help motivate you — and you them — to conquer temptations. The road to salvation is best walked with the company of those we love.



## Prayer



## Faith Lesson

### We are “one body in Christ”

Jesus tells us that he is “the vine” and we “are the branches” (Jn 15:5). If we are not connected to him, we cannot produce good fruit. Indeed, without Jesus, we have no life within us.

The same goes for relationships. When we are closely connected to one another, the good fruits of joy, charity, and peace thrive. However, when we are angry with one another, we only reap

division, injustice, and loneliness.

That is why the gift of forgiveness is so important. From God, we are forgiven of our sins and thus reconnected to his glorious power. When we forgive others their offenses, we repair his earthly body and make it stronger. We are “one body in Christ,” and it would be wise to maintain it as the unified body it was designed to be.

Blessed Trinity, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, you are love. In your communion we see, experience, and understand love. Help me to be for others the same source of joy and mercy that you and your Communion of Saints are to me.

“The saints have always been the source and origin of renewal in the most difficult moments in the Church’s history.”

~ ST. JOHN PAUL II