

HOMILY ON THE FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT – APRIL 6, 2025



Isaiah 43: 16 -21, Philippians 3: 8 -14, John 8: 1 -11.

My dear friends in Christ, since the fall of Adam and Eve our ancestors, the fallen state of man often makes him prone to sin. However, my brothers and sisters, the most pathetic situation is that the majority of us see the sins of our neighbors rather than our own sins. The word of God says in (Matthew 7:5), "...Remove the wooden beam from your eye first; then you will see clearly to remove the splinter from your brother's eye." Surely God will not condone sin, but we must note that Jesus' mission is not to condemn the sinner but the sin.

In (John 3:17), the word of God says, "For God did not send his Son into the World to condemn the World, but that the World might be saved through him." The Pharisees fail to see their own sins, but that the woman caught in the very act of committing adultery. Our Lord Jesus Christ calls us to daily realize that we are sinners in need of God's mercy. This surely will help us not just to seek the mercy of God but to constantly show mercy to others. In the first reading today (Isaiah 43: 16 -21), God declares, "I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?". This signifies that God is not limited to past actions and is capable of doing something new and surprising.

This passage encourages us to "forget the former things; do not dwell on the past". This means to move beyond past failures and look forward to the new things God is about to do. In the second reading today, (Philippians 3: 8 -14) St. Paul states that he considers everything a loss, even his former accomplishments and Jewish heritage, because of the "surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus". He views these things as "rubbish" or "garbage" compared to the privilege of knowing Christ. May God give us the grace to be focused in Christ. Peace be with you all!

Ezekiel 37: 12- 14, Romans 8:8 – 11, John 11: 1- 45

My dear friends in Christ, there is a hymn written by John Sheehan, he is likely to be American. "Deep within us, shared among us, May we ever keep the mind and heart of Jesus Christ...." This hymn invites us to keep the mind and heart of Jesus Christ, that means to have the mind and heart of Our Lord Jesus Christ. A heart that feels for others, a heart that loves and cares for others.

In the gospel today, the humanity of Jesus was evident when he wept on seeing the tomb of Lazarus. (Jesus Wept) But we see immediately his divinity when he raised Lazarus from the dead, fulfilling his earlier words to Martha: "I am the resurrection and the life; whoever believes in me will live, even if he dies." The words of Our Lord Jesus Christ to Lazarus, "Come out," are still relevant for us today. We are humans, yes, but the Lord calls us to come out of ourselves to divinize ourselves and our activities with his grace, so as to have life and have it to the full. May Our Lord Jesus Christ deliver us from the works and snares of the evil one, and give us life to the full, as he promised in (John 10: 10).

My dear brothers and sisters, I pray that God will give us the grace to feel the pains and sufferings of those around us. May God give us a heart of flesh, (Ezekiel 36:26), to care for our world.

Peace be with you all!
Fr. Elias Udeh, CSSp.