

**11<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time, Cycle C**  
**June 13, 2010**

**Readings: 2 Samuel 12:7-10, 13; Galatians 2:16, 19-21; Luke 7:36-50**

**No Sin Too Big**

Last year I received and responded to a question from the question box from a woman who had had an abortion. She wondered if God could ever forgive this awful sin. She asked if she could ever get to heaven or avoid eternal life in hell.

In our first reading this morning we find King David wondering much the same things. Even though God had done great things for David, had blessed him with great possessions and with many wives, David was not content with all that he had. And so when he lusted after Uriah's wife, he sent for her, slept with her, and conceived a child. Then, to prevent a scandal, David arranged to have Uriah killed in battle and quickly married his wife and brought her into his home. Adultery, followed by murder to cover it up; now that's some pretty serious wrongdoing. In some regards, however, David was oblivious to his sins against God, and it took Nathan to point out God's displeasure.

And this is where we see the great willingness of God to forgive. Once David admits his sinfulness, Nathan informs him that God has forgiven his great sins. There may still be some punishment in store for him, but he will not face eternal damnation.

We try to do good things, but we fall and do bad things instead. Sometimes we do some really bad things. When we do, it's good to remember to repent, to go to confession, and ask for forgiveness.

Our scriptures this morning show how we can get ourselves in trouble from two different perspectives. The first way to get in trouble is not to ask for God's forgiveness. The second way is much more insidious. It's when we fail to admit that we are sinners. David had this problem until Nathan challenged him. In the gospel story, the sinful woman who cleansed Jesus' feet with her tears and anointed them did not have this problem, but the host of the party did. The woman had very grave sins, a large debt to repay, and Jesus forgave it all. The Pharisee had sins that were not so great, his debt was small, but unfortunately he did not admit his sinfulness at all. His sins were not forgiven.

When we do something very seriously wrong, we usually know it, and hopefully we admit it to God and ask for forgiveness. We repent and try to do penance and make sacrifices to reduce the punishment associated with our sins in purgatory. But often we act as the Pharisee. Instead of looking at how our actions fall short of what God desires and deserves, we look at how our actions compare to someone else's. We start thinking that we are pretty saintly compared to someone else who we judge to be a sinner.

But that's not the way it should work. At our judgment we will be judged according to an absolute scale according to God's law, not how we compare to our neighbor down the street. God will take into account what gifts He has given to us; from those who have received much, much will be expected. God will extend His mercy according to our repentance and our willingness to be merciful to others. We may be surprised when some thought to be great sinners in life receive a lesser punishment than those who try to pass themselves off as holy.

God is loving. He wants our actions to be based on a loving response to Him, not just being better than the next guy. God is good. He wants us to try to be perfect as His heavenly Father is

perfect. But when we fail, He wants us to admit our failures, and He will forgive us. The message for this morning has two parts: there is no sin so big that God will not forgive it, and there is no sin so small that it does not require our repentance.

**Deacon Joe Hulway**