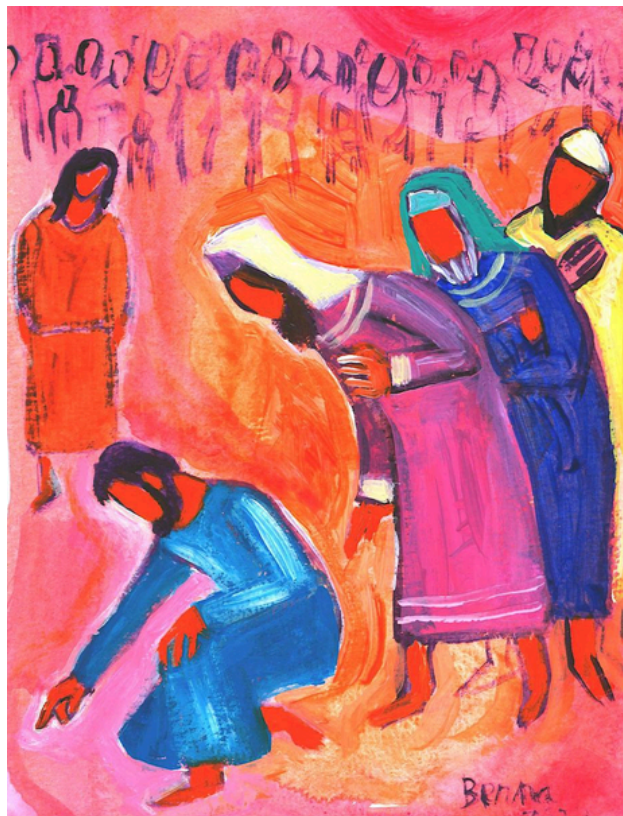


LIGHT THAT OVERCOMES DARKNESS

FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT



In the Shadow of the Word

Jesus was left alone with the woman, who remained in the middle.

Jesus again straightened up and said, 'Woman, where are they?
Has no one condemned you?'

She replied, 'No one, sir.'

Then Jesus said, 'Neither do I condemn you. Go away,
and from this moment, sin no more.'
(Jn 8: 9-11)

The woman has no name and no age. All that is said about her is that she is standing in the middle of a hostile circle. She is one more in the category of those who are despised, and only Jesus looks at her, speaks to her and makes her an equal partner in conversation.

They wanted to condemn her but Jesus forgives her; they wanted to confine her within the limits of an inflexible law but he writes in the sand, the sand of the road and the horizon; they wanted to stone her with violence but he welcomes her with his mercy and he opens to her a life of freedom.



Women who accompany us on our journey

Tamar, Rahab, Bathsheba and Ruth

In the middle of a list of men's names in the genealogy of Jesus (*Matthew 1:1-17*), four women's names appear surprisingly, like threads of different colours and textures in a tapestry.

Their stories are marked by peculiar circumstances and questionable behaviour: Tamar, Judah's daughter-in-law, disguised herself as a prostitute in order to have offspring by father-in-law (*cf. Gen 38*). Rahab, a prostitute from Jericho, agreed to a favourable deal in exchange for hiding two Israelite spies. Ruth was a pagan and a Moabite (*cf. Num 25*) and Bathsheba had an adulterous relationship with King David (*cf. 2Sm 11-12*).

Possibly none of them was Jewish: Tamar and Rahab were Canaanites, Ruth a Moabite and Bathsheba a Hittite, but these unconventional women are central to the Gospel narrative and all four are part of our salvation story.

It was precisely through them that the fabric of the incarnation of the Son of God was woven.

We convert the calls of Chapter 2024 into a prayer of supplication:

Help us, Lord to recognize our prejudices and stereotypes, to heal the wounds of the past, and to discover the blessings of mutual acceptance.

Help us to accept the uncertainty and tensions caused by divergences and convergences, in order to allow life to emerge in all its newness.

Help us to embrace our differences, our wounds and our personal and shared vulnerabilities, so that we may be healed and become more alive.

We listen to the song, [I Am Light by India Arie](#)

*I am light I am not the things my family did... I am not the voices in my head...
I am not the pieces of the brokenness inside... I am light... I am light
I'm not the mistakes that I have made...
or any other thing that cause me pain...
I'm not the pieces of the dreams I left behind... I am light
I am not the color of my eyes... I am not the skin on the outside...
I am not my age... I am not my race... my soul inside is all light... all light...
I am divinity defined... I am the God on the inside...
I am a star, a piece of All... I... am light...*

*Dolores Aleixandre rscj
Spain*

