

**"Who understands your paths, Lord? It's all about loving and loving more and asking for love without ceasing." "You have sent us so that everyone may accept the mercy you want to give: the torrent of love that flows from your Heart. You have sent us to work so that everyone can know You and love You."**  
**(St. Raphaela Mary)**



Jesus went to the Mount of Olives. Early in the morning he came again to the temple. All the people came to him, and he sat down and taught them. The scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in adultery, and placing her in the midst they said to him, "Teacher, this woman has been caught in the act of adultery. Now in the Law, Moses commanded us to stone such women. So what do you say?" This they said to test him, that they might have some charge to bring against him. Jesus bent down and wrote with his finger on the ground. And as they continued to ask him, he stood up and said to them, "Let him who is without sin among you be the first to throw a stone at her." And once more he bent down and wrote on the ground. But when they heard it, they went away one by one, beginning with the older ones, and Jesus was left alone with the woman standing before him. Jesus stood up and said to her, "Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?" She said, "No one, Lord." And Jesus said, "Neither do I condemn you; go, and from now on sin no more."  
 (John 8, 1-11)

Today Jesus meets the woman condemned for adultery and, without any kind of petition or initiative on her part, grants her free pardon, radical amnesty, and general forgiveness. Jesus shows the mercy of God, placing himself on the side of the victims and revealing God's gratuitous and unconditional love for sinners. A God who, with his merciful love, with his forgiveness, restores the life and dignity of each one, in this case, of the adulterous woman they have brought before him.

Given the complicated situation in which they place Jesus, his response is clear: *there is always room for mercy and life*. What the adulteress needed was not stones, but a merciful heart and a helping hand to raise her up. Hopefully we will discover that what many people need is not the condemnation of the law, but that we help them and offer them a chance for rehabilitation, dignity and life. Let us listen to the encouraging call to change our hearts and learn to live in a more human way, because God is close and wants to heal our life. God forgives us and invites us to do the same.

Give us your Spirit, Lord, to open our hearts to your mercy, to heal our miseries and make us strong in your love.

### YOUR DRAWINGS ON THE GROUND

Your drawings on the ground have had a surprising effect: the moralistic and accusing circle has been broken and, alone with you, for the first time, I felt free.

Your drawings on the ground were the first non-deceptive mirror that made me see my sad face, my poor and hesitant being, and my habitual fears.

Your drawings on the ground created a penetrating silence, as they uncovered the tragic parody we experience when we believe we are different.

Your drawings on the ground returned my lost dignity, when your firm and gentle finger, with the ordinary dust and my lost tears, shaped my new smiling face.

Then you stood up. You serenely looked into my eyes, you kissed me as no one else ever has, and you said: Go and live; now you know. And I did not dare to hug you.

But I carry your drawings of the ground tattooed on my skin forever, because you were the first to accept me, to love and forgive me unconditionally and to leave me clean and free.

(Florentino Ulibarri)