

John 8: 1 - 11

Have any of you watched the film "The Italian Job"? And do you remember how it ends?

Yes – the coach hanging over the cliff top ... with all the loot at the end that will tip them all into the abyss ...

What happened next? We don't know.

Similarly for this woman we've just heard about in our Gospel. Jesus neither condemns nor condones ...

"Neither do I condemn you – go on your way, and from now on – do not sin again"

What did she do? We don't know. *(So spend 5 mins in your groups sharing one thing that struck you from that passage.)* And now a Meditation ...

'Forgiveness without conditions'

'You festoon us with forgiveness

You do not ask us to haggle with you

over punishment or deals.

"Your sin is forgiven.

Do not sin any more.

Go and live without fear

and do not lug around the dead body of the past

on shoulders that are free."

You do not ask for security

on the unpayable debt

of having turned against you.

You offer us a new life,

no need to labour,

overcome by anguish,

paying off the interest

of an infinite account.

You forgive us whole heartedly.

You are not a God who apportions percentages of love;

"To this one 75

and to this one only 23."

We do what we do

And yet are sons and daughters 100%

Your pardon is for everyone.

Not only do you carry the lost sheep

on your shoulder

but the wolf too

stained with sheep's blood.

You always forgive.

You leap up to welcome us

on the road of return

seventy times seven

neither turning your face from us

nor rationing out your words,

for our repeated running away.

And with forgiveness you grant us joy,

You do not want us chewing over

our broken past

in some corner of the house

like a wounded animal

but celebrating the feast

with all our brothers and sisters

dressed in party best and perfumed

entering into your joy.

We ask you in the *Our Father*

"Forgive us as we forgive."

Today we ask you still more:

Teach us to forgive others and ourselves as you forgive us.'

(From Psalms to accompany the Spiritual Exercises of St Ignatius of Loyola by Benjamin Gonzalez SJ translated by Damian Howard SJ copyright The Way 2012)