



# Asian Journal of Religious Studies

“The Lord is truly among us.”

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## Contents

Editorial: Being Sinners .....	3
A Pioneer in Hindu-Christian Dialogue in Depth.....	5
<i>Cosme Jose Costa SFX</i>	
Thoughts for Teachers.....	12
<i>Kurien Kunnumpuram SJ</i>	
Mary, Full of Grace: The Meaning and Interpretation of This Greeting .....	18
<i>Jomin J Nirappel</i>	
Church Needs to Become Pro-Poor and Pro-Marginalised.....	27
<i>Jose Thayil SJ</i>	
Adieu to Prof Dr Fr Lorenzo Fernando.....	31
<i>Nishant Irudayadson &amp; Joe Francis</i>	
Homily Notes .....	37





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## Editorial

# Being Sinners Who Have Experienced Mercy

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God did not choose perfect people to form his church, but rather sinners who have experienced his love and forgiveness, Pope Francis said.

The Gospel of Luke's account of Jesus forgiving the sinful woman shows how his actions went against the general mentality of his time, a way of thinking that saw a "clear separation" between the pure and impure, the pope said Aug. 9, 2017 during his weekly general audience, as reported in Catholic News Service.

"There were some scribes, those who believed they were perfect," the pope said. "And I think about so many Catholics who think they are perfect and scorn others. This is sad."

Continuing his series of audience talks about Christian hope, the pope reflected on Jesus' "scandalous gesture" of forgiving the sinful woman. The woman, he said, was one of many poor women who was visited secretly even by those who denounced her as sinful.

Although Jesus' love toward the sick and the marginalized "baffles his contemporaries," it reveals God's heart as the place where suffering men and women can find love, compassion and healing, Pope Francis said.

“How many people continue today in a wayward life because they find no one willing to look at them in a different way, with the eyes—or better yet—with the heart of God, meaning with hope,” he said. But “Jesus sees the possibility of a resurrection even in those who have made so many wrong choices.”

Oftentimes, the pope continued, Christians become accustomed to having their sins forgiven and receiving God’s unconditional love while forgetting the heavy price Jesus paid by dying on the cross.

***Christians are “all poor sinners” who need God’s mercy, “which strengthens us and gives us hope.”***

By forgiving sinners, Jesus doesn’t seek to free them from a guilty conscience, but rather offers “people who have made mistakes the hope of a new life, a life marked by love,” the pope added.

The church is a people formed “of sinners who have experienced the mercy and forgiveness of God,” Pope Francis said. Christians are “all poor sinners” who need God’s mercy, “which strengthens us and gives us hope.”

May we always realise that we are sinners, blessed and graced, so that we will be compassionate to others.

Kuruvilla Pandikattu SJ

The Editor