

**There Is Forgiveness With You
Restorative Criminal Justice**

**Fifth Sunday in Lent, Year A
Overview**

Focus Text: Psalm 130

If you, O LORD, should mark iniquities, Lord, who could stand? But there is forgiveness with you, so that you may be revered.

Pastoral Reflection by Rev. Dr. Madeline Gay McClenney-Sadler, Founder & President, Exodus Foundation.org, Charlotte

If there were such a thing as a six o'clock news cast in the first century, Jesus the felon would appear walking down the street escorted by the police of his day—handcuffed—if you will. The announcer would tell us that the vandal who destroyed Temple property and repeatedly broke Jewish laws; the welfare king who relied on the generosity of unsuspecting middle class women to promote his suspicious doctrine; the man known to frequent the establishments of tax collectors and prostitutes—and claimed to be God, had finally been apprehended and was awaiting sentencing. Yes, in the minds of this first century felon's accusers, he was little more than a common criminal.

Key Fact

In the state of NC there are currently 38,284 inmates, with the holding space for 33,148 inmates. In NC, for every one Caucasian in prison or jail there are 5.4 African Americans.