



# Sons of Saint Joseph <sup>tm</sup>

ST. THERESA ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH  
5301 MAIN STREET TRUMBULL, CT 06611  
[www.sonsofsaintjoseph.org](http://www.sonsofsaintjoseph.org)

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## SOSJ –4– HOLY FATHERS PART 2 Thomas More and Conscience Saturday, October 21, 2023

### John 8: 2-11

But early in the morning he arrived again in the temple area, and all the people started coming to him, and he sat down and taught them. Then the scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in adultery and made her stand in the middle. They said to him, “Teacher, this woman was caught in the very act of committing adultery. Now in the law, Moses commanded us to stone such women. So what do you say?” They said this to test him, so that they could have some charge to bring against him. Jesus bent down and began to write on the ground with his finger. But when they continued asking him, he straightened up and said to them, “Let the one among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her.” Again, he bent down and wrote on the ground. And in response, they went away one by one, beginning with the elders. So he was left alone with the woman before him. Then Jesus straightened up and said to her, “Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?” She replied, “No one, sir.” Then Jesus said, “Neither do I condemn you. Go, [and] from now on do not sin anymore.”

### Questions

1. What is conscience? What are false ideas of conscience? How do we explain the Catholic understanding to our children?
2. Why is one of the most important duties of fatherhood helping to form a good conscience in children? What are many reasons this supersedes developing any earthly skill?
3. Why in this case would St. Thomas More’s application of conscience keep him quiet instead of condemning Henry VIII outright and publicly? When does conscience demand that we speak publicly in one situation, but speak quietly in another? What are examples of where we falsely keep quiet when we should speak up?
4. Why can having a crisis of conscience be a good thing in the long run? Why could it be a blessing when we face a difficult choice of morality, especially in front of family and a crowd?