

24 Ord A DLG 2017, Sir 27: 30—28: 9; Rom 14:7-9; Mat 18:21-35

### FORGIVENESS NOT EASY

I have to level with you: this whole forgiveness thing is not as easy as it sounds. In my life, I have been able to forgive most people who have wronged me. The gospel tells us we should forgive from the heart.

### SAINT JOHN

Do you have trouble forgiving others? Saint John Chrysostom encourages us to forgive our debtors. He says that forgiveness is a path to heaven. Saint John asks us to, “Put out of our minds the harm done us by our enemies. Do this in order to master our anger and to forgive our fellow servants’ sins against us.”

### GOSPEL AND FORGIVENESS

The Gospel tells us that not forgiving others tortures us inside. Being angry with someone, holding it inside day after day after day, causes unrest. That unrest hurts us more than it hurts the person who has wronged us.

### EXAMPLE

I have had confessions about not being able to forgive from people who have been abused and raped. People who had loved ones killed by reckless drivers, spouses who cheated, women who have had abortions, mothers whose child was sexually abused, and the list goes on

### 7X77

Do you think it's easy to forgive people who have done these things? Not a chance! The gospel tells us that it may take up to 7 X 77 times to forgive someone. The gospel also says that not forgiving hurts us more than it hurts the other person.

### THEY DON'T ASK FOR FORGIVENESS

It makes it very hard to forgive someone if they don't ask for forgiveness. 7 X 77 times means that it could take a good part of ones life to forgive another. Forgiveness takes time, courage, and prayer.

### GRACE AND GUIDANCE

Forgiveness also takes grace and guidance. We have to depend on grace from God and guidance from the Holy Spirit.

### RISK AND FORGIVENESS

Forgiveness might mean taking a risk. For example, to that person I am having a hard time forgiving, I envision saying something like, "Look, this whole situation still bothers me. Let's talk about it." Hopefully, when and if I talk to this person, I will ask the Holy Spirit for guidance and be open to God's grace.

### TAKE INVENTORY

The gospel is asking us to take an inventory of the people in our lives who we have not fully forgiven.

### WHY TAKE INVENTORY

Why? The reading from Sirach tells us why. "Wrath and anger are hateful things, yet the sinner hugs them tight." Sirach tells us that it is a sin to hold anger for another person inside us.

Danny Peterson

If you need to ask forgiveness for something you did to someone else, do it ASAP. I stoled away the woman who was renting my brother-in-law's house. I offered her my rental house for cheaper and she took it. My brother-in-law found out and was irate. Before I had a chance to ask him to forgive me, he died in a hunting accident. To this day I feel bad about not reconciling with him.

### THIS WEEK

As we go through this week, let us pray for guidance, strength, and courage to forgive that person in our lives who has wronged us. Also, if we have wronged someone, reconcile with them, ask them to forgive you.

If we wish to follow the Lord's ways completely; if we wish to "Live for the Lord" as the reading from Romans tells us; then we must forgive one another from the heart.

### CONCLUSION

Forgiveness is a path to heaven. Forgiving others brings us peace. Forgiveness gives us hope for eternal life (515 Words).

### PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL: 24th Sunday in Ordinary Time Year A

#### Celebrant

Let us now bring our prayers and petitions to our heavenly Father.

#### Deacon/Lector

For the church, for forgiveness and mercy within her ranks, that anger may be put aside and love for one another may prevail, we pray to the Lord.

For the suffering little ones who endure sickness and poverty, that God may redeem their life from destruction and crown them with kindness and compassion, we pray to the Lord.

That those who are sick or near death, and those who care for them, know the reality of God's love through the community's support, we pray to the Lord.

For those who have died (especially .....): that the Lord of all gentleness will welcome them into his peaceful presence,

let us pray to the Lord.

In Silence let us now add our own intentions for our families, our community, our country, and the world....., We pray to the Lord.

Celebrant

Gracious and merciful God, hear our prayers and answer them in your great love and mercy. We ask this through Chr

Sirach 27: 30—28: 9

Wrath and anger are hateful things, yet the sinner hugs them tight. The vengeful will suffer the LORD'S vengeance, for he remembers their sins in detail. Forgive your neighbor's injustice; then when you pray, your own sins will be forgiven. Should a man nourish anger against his fellows and expect healing from the LORD? Should a man refuse mercy to his fellows, yet seek pardon for his own sins? If he who is but flesh cherishes wrath, who will forgive his sins? Remember your last days, set enmity aside; remember death and decay, and cease from sin! Think of the commandments, hate not your neighbor; of the Most High's covenant, and overlook faults. Avoid strife and your sins will be fewer, for a quarrelsome man kindles disputes, Commits the sin of disrupting friendship and sows discord among those at peace.

Romans 14:7-9

None of us lives for oneself, and no one dies for oneself. For if we live, we live for the Lord, and if we die, we die for the Lord; so then, whether we live or die, we are the Lord's. For this is why Christ died and came to life, that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living.

Mat 18:21-35

Then Peter approaching asked him, "Lord, if my brother sins against me, how often must I forgive him? As many as seven times?" Jesus answered, "I say to you, not seven times but seventy-seven times. That is why the kingdom of heaven may be likened to a king who decided to settle accounts with his servants. When he began the accounting, a debtor was brought before him who owed him a huge amount. Since he had no way of paying it back, his master ordered him to be sold, along with his wife, his children, and all his property, in payment of the debt. At that, the servant fell down, did him homage, and said, 'Be patient with me, and I will pay you back in full.' Moved with compassion the master of that servant let him go and forgave him the loan. When that servant had left, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a much smaller amount. He seized him and started to choke him, demanding, 'Pay back what you owe.' Falling to his knees, his fellow servant begged him, 'Be patient with me, and I will pay you back.' But he refused. Instead, he had him put in prison until he paid back the debt. Now when his fellow servants saw what had happened, they were deeply disturbed, and went to their master and reported the whole affair. His master summoned him and said to him, 'You wicked servant! I forgave you your entire debt because you begged me to. Should you not have had pity on your fellow servant, as I had pity on you?' Then in anger his master handed him over to the torturers until he should pay back the whole debt. So will my heavenly Father do to you, unless each of you forgives his brother from his heart."