

and children and all his possessions, to meet the debt. At this, the servant threw himself down at his master's feet. "Give me time," he said, "and I will pay the whole sum." And the servant's master felt so sorry for him that he let him go and cancelled the debt. Now as this servant went out, he happened to meet a fellow servant who owed him one hundred denarii; and he seized him by the throat and began to throttle him. "Pay what you owe me," he said. His fellow servant fell at his feet and implored him, saying, "Give me time and I will pay you." But the other would not agree; on the contrary, he had him thrown into prison till he should pay the debt. His fellow servants were deeply distressed when they saw what had happened, and they went to their master and reported the whole affair to him. Then the master sent for him. "You wicked servant," he said, "I cancelled all that debt of yours when you appealed to me. Were you not bound, then, to have pity on your fellow servant just as I had pity on you?" And in his anger the master handed him over to the torturers till he should pay all his debt. And that is how my heavenly Father will deal with you unless you each forgive your brother from your heart.

The Gospel of the Lord.

R. Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

HOMILY

PROFESSION OF FAITH APOSTLES' CREED
Or the Nicene Creed may be said.

I believe in God, / the Father almighty, / Creator of heaven and earth, / and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, / who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, / born of the Virgin Mary, / suffered under Pontius Pilate, / was crucified, died and was buried; / he descended into hell; / on the third day he rose again from the dead; / he ascended into heaven, / and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty; / from there he will come to judge the living and the dead. / I believe in the Holy Spirit, / the holy catholic Church, / the communion of saints, / the forgiveness of sins, / the resurrection of the body, / and life everlasting. Amen.

PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

After the priest raises the paten with the bread and prays, and then the chalice, we respond to each prayer:

R. Blessed be God for ever.

P. Pray, brethren (brothers and sisters), that my sacrifice and yours may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.

R. May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands for the praise and glory of his name, for our good and the good of all his holy Church.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

P. Look with favour on our supplications, O Lord, and in your kindness accept these, your servants' offerings, that what each has

offered to the honour of your name may serve the salvation of all. Through Christ our Lord.

R. Amen.

THE EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

P. The Lord be with you.

R. And with your spirit.

P. Lift up your hearts.

R. We lift them up to the Lord.

P. Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

R. It is right and just.

PREFACE I-VIII OF THE SUNDAYS IN ORDINARY TIME

After the Preface, we sing or say:

All: Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts.

Heaven and earth are full of your glory.

Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he

who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

THE MEMORIAL ACCLAMATION

P. The mystery of faith.

All: We proclaim your Death, O Lord,

and profess your Resurrection

until you come again.

COMMUNION RITE

P. At the Saviour's command and formed by divine teaching, we dare to say:

All: Our Father, who art in heaven ...

P. Deliver us, Lord, we pray...

All: For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours now and for ever.

P. Lord Jesus Christ, who said...

R. Amen.

P. The peace of the Lord be with you always.

R. And with your spirit.

P. Let us offer each other the sign of peace.

All exchange a sign of peace

LAMB OF GOD

All: Lamb of God, you take away the sins

of the world, have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of

the world, have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of

the world, grant us peace.

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

P. Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who takes away the sins of the world. Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

R. Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

cf. Ps 35: 8

How precious is your mercy, O God!

The children of men seek shelter in the

shadow of your wings.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

P. May the working of this heavenly gift,

O Lord, we pray, take possession of our minds

and bodies, so that its effects, and not our

own desires, may always prevail in us.

Through Christ our Lord.

R. Amen.

THE CONCLUDING RITES

P. The Lord be with you.

R. And with your spirit.

P. May almighty God bless you, the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

R. Amen.

P. Go in peace.

R. Thanks be to God.

REFLECTIONS ON THE GOSPEL

FORGIVENESS BEYOND CALCULATION

In the parable of the Unforgiving Debtor that Jesus tells in response to Peter's question about forgiveness, the debt of 'ten thousand talents' is an utterly fantastic sum: in today's terms, 'billions of dollars'—something that the servant, despite his plea for time, could never hope to repay. He stands to lose absolutely everything—freedom, family, possessions—for his whole life long. The master's generosity in cancelling the debt in effect restores his life.

In comparison, the debt that the servant himself is owed by a fellow servant and which he is violently unwilling to remit, is paltry. The equivalent of a few hundred days' wages. Given time, it could easily be paid off. Hence the wickedness of the servant in not passing on to his fellow even a tiny portion of the immense generosity he had himself received.

The Lord would have Peter and all members of the community understand that they live as people who, through Christ's costly love, have received remission of a debt (the debt of sin) that they could never repay. How inappropriate then an unwillingness to forgive fellow members of the community the 'debts' set up by injury on a much smaller scale.

That said, we know that forgiveness is not something to speak of lightly. For people who have been deeply wronged finding the capacity to forgive may be the task of a lifetime. It cannot simply be willed—still less prescribed, urged or imposed by others who have not shared the loss. It is a grace, an entrance into the mystery of God's own generosity.

BRENDAN BYRNE, SJ

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OUR SUNDAY CELEBRATION

TWENTY-FOURTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME / A

13 SEPTEMBER 2020

HOW OFTEN MUST I FORGIVE? There is much truth in the proverb, 'to err is human, to forgive divine'. We all make mistakes. We all do or say things we later regret. And yet, when others wrong us, we can find it beyond our human strength to forgive. As we celebrate the mystery of Christ's love today, let us ask Jesus to heal our divisions and fill our hearts with his spirit of forgiveness.

INTRODUCTORY RITES

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON *cf. Sir 36: 18*

Give peace, O Lord, to those who wait for you, that your prophets be found true. Hear the prayers of your servant, and of your people Israel.

GREETING

P. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

R. Amen.

P. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

R. And with your spirit.

PENITENTIAL ACT

P. Brethren (brothers and sisters), let us acknowledge our sins, and so prepare ourselves to celebrate the sacred mysteries.

P. You were sent to heal the contrite of heart: Lord, have mercy.

R. Lord, have mercy.

P. You came to call sinners: Christ, have mercy.

R. Christ, have mercy.

You are seated at the right hand of the Father to intercede for us: Lord, have mercy.

R. Lord, have mercy.

P. May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life.

R. Amen.

GLORIA

Glory to God in the highest, / and on earth peace to people of good will. / We praise you, / we bless you, / we adore you, / we glorify you, / we give you thanks for your great glory, / Lord God, heavenly King, / O God, almighty Father, / Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son, / Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, / you take away the sins of the world, / have mercy on us; / you take away the sins of the world, / receive our prayer; / you are seated at the right hand of the Father, / have mercy on us. / For you alone are the Holy One, / you alone are the Lord, / you alone are the Most High, / Jesus Christ, / with the Holy Spirit, / in the glory of God the Father. / Amen.

COLLECT

P. Look upon us, O God, Creator and ruler of all things, and, that we may feel the working of your mercy, grant that we may serve you with all our heart. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

R. Amen.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

FIRST READING

Sir 27:30–28:7

A reading from the Book of Sirach.

Forgive your neighbour's faults and when you pray, your sins will be forgiven.

Resentment and anger, these are foul things, and both are found with the sinner.

He who exacts vengeance will experience the vengeance of the Lord,

who keeps strict account of sin.

Forgive your neighbour the hurt he does you, and when you pray, your sins will be forgiven.

If a man nurses anger against another, can he then demand compassion from the Lord?

Showing no pity for a man like himself, can he then plead for his own sins?

Remember the last things, and stop hating, remember dissolution and death, and live by the commandments.

Remember the commandments, and do not bear your neighbour ill-will;

remember the covenant of the Most High, and overlook the offence.

The word of the Lord.

R. Thanks be to God.

RESP PSALM

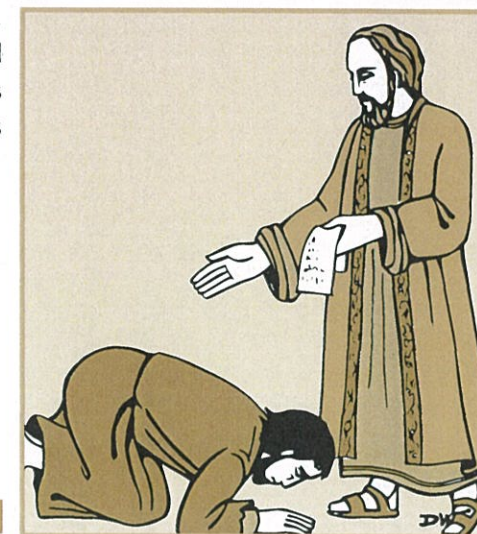
Ps 102: 1-4, 9-12. R. v. 8

R. The Lord is kind and merciful; slow to anger and rich in compassion.

1. My soul, give thanks to the Lord, / all my being, bless his holy name. / My soul, give thanks to the Lord / and never forget all his blessings. **R.**

2. It is he who forgives all your guilt, / who heals every one of your ills, / who redeems your life from the grave, / who crowns you with love and compassion. **R.**

3. His wrath will come to an end; / he will not be angry for ever. / He does not treat us according to our sins / nor repay us according to our faults. **R.**



4. For as the heavens are high above the earth / so strong is his love for those who fear him. / As far as the east is from the west / so far does he remove our sins. **R.**

SECOND READING

Rom 14: 7-9

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans.

Whether alive or dead, we belong to the Lord.

The life and death of each of us has its influence on others; if we live, we live for the Lord; and if we die, we die for the Lord, so that alive or dead we belong to the Lord. This explains why Christ both died and came to life, it was so that he might be Lord both of the dead and of the living.

The word of the Lord.

R. Thanks be to God

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Jn 13: 34

Alleluia, alleluia! / I give you a new commandment: / love one another as I have loved you. / Alleluia!

GOSPEL

Mt 18: 21-35

P. The Lord be with you.

R. And with your spirit.

P. A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.

R. Glory to you, O Lord.

I tell you that you forgive not seven times but seventy times seven.

Peter went up to Jesus and said, 'Lord, how often must I forgive my brother if he wrongs me? As often as seven times?' Jesus answered, 'Not seven, I tell you, but seventy-seven times.'

'And so the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who decided to settle his accounts with his servants. When the reckoning began, they brought him a man who owed ten thousand talents; but he had no means of paying, so his master gave orders that he should be sold, together with his wife