

September 17th 2023 24th Sunday of Ordinary Time – Year A – Matthew 18:21-35

²¹ Then Peter came and said to him, ‘Lord, if another member of the church* sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?’ ²²Jesus said to him, ‘Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times.

²³ ‘For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. ²⁴When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him; ²⁵and, as he could not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions, and payment to be made. ²⁶So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, “Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.” ²⁷And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. ²⁸But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow-slaves who owed him a hundred denarii;* and seizing him by the throat, he said, “Pay what you owe.” ²⁹Then his fellow-slave fell down and pleaded with him, “Have patience with me, and I will pay you.” ³⁰But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he should pay the debt. ³¹When his fellow-slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. ³²Then his lord summoned him and said to him, “You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. ³³Should you not have had mercy on your fellow-slave, as I had mercy on you?” ³⁴And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he should pay his entire debt. ³⁵So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart.’

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Read and re-read – out loud and slowly the Gospel. ➤ Meditate - on reading as being spoken to you, an experience in your life 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Pray - Thanksgiving – Repentance – Petition ➤ Action – Attitude (Call to change / to act /to do
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In this week’s gospel Jesus surprised Peter by asking him to forgive seventy-seven times. Hurts and wrongs are part of human relations so each one of us may have to forgive many times in our lives and it is not always easy. Jesus is always there to help us if we trust and believe he understands our human condition. True forgiveness is from within. It is God-given, a matter of forgiving from the heart. Who are the people whose ability to forgive has inspired us?

Prayer:

Thank you Lord for the people who by their example of forgiveness have shown us the peace & freedom it brings to us and our world.

Forgive us Lord for the times we had negative thoughts and feelings towards those who hurt us. We prevented the freedom in mind , soul and body which true forgiveness brings.

Help us Lord to realise it is not God who keeps us in bondage but ourselves when we do not forgive but act in a negative way towards those who hurt us. We very quickly become filled with negative thoughts.

