



The Joy of Forgiveness

Word of the Week

Luke 15: 11-32

Jesus continued: "There was a man who had two sons. The younger one said to his father, 'Father, give me my share of the estate.' So he divided his property between them.

"Not long after that, the younger son got together all he had, set off for a distant country and there squandered his wealth in wild living. After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need. So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed pigs. He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything.

"When he came to his senses, he said, 'How many of my father's hired servants have food to spare, and here I am starving to death! I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired servants.' So he got up and went to his father.

"But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him.

"The son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.'

"But the father said to his servants, 'Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let's have a feast and celebrate. For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.' So they began to celebrate.

"Meanwhile, the older son was in the field. When he came near the house, he heard music and dancing. So he called one of the servants and asked him what was going on. 'Your brother has come,' he replied, 'and your father has killed the fattened calf because he has him back safe and sound.'

"The older brother became angry and refused to go in. So his father went out and pleaded with him. But he answered his father, 'Look! All these years I've been slaving for you and never disobeyed your orders. Yet you never gave me even a young goat so I could celebrate with my friends. But when this son of yours who has squandered your property with prostitutes comes home, you kill the fattened calf for him!'

"'My son,' the father said, 'you are always with me, and everything I have is yours. But we had to celebrate and be glad, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.'"



SILENT!

Prayer for the week

I INVITE YOU TO HAVE
1 MINUTE OF SILENCE.
BE STILL.

IN THE SILENCE OF YOUR
HEART ASK YOURSELF THESE
QUESTIONS:

Do I always forgive myself
when I make a mistake?

Do I seek God's forgiveness for
the times I have hurt others?

Do I forgive others for the hurt
they may have caused me?

Do I ask for forgiveness from
the people I may have hurt or
upset?



Something to think about...

Sin distances us from God. But God longs for us to be close to him again by becoming aware of the effect of our sins. This week we will have the opportunity to confess our sins to God so that we can be restored and renewed by God's Mercy.

Think for a moment about a time when you have hurt someone, when you have really regretted doing or saying something. And then remember that joy you feel when that person forgives you for what you have done, the relief you feel. This is how we should feel each time we go to confession and are forgiven by God for any mistakes we have made that hurt others, ourselves or our relationship with God. God is always there loving us, and ready to welcome us home.

Two friends were walking through the desert. During some point of the journey, they had an argument, and one friend slapped the other one in the face. The one who got slapped was hurt, but without saying anything, he wrote in the sand:

"Today my best friend slapped me in the face."

They kept on walking, until they found an oasis, where they decided to go for a swim. The one who had been slapped got into difficulty in the water and started drowning, but his friend saved him. After he recovered from the near drowning, he wrote on a stone:

"Today my best friend saved my life."

The friend, who had slapped and saved his best friend, asked him, "After I hurt you, you wrote in the sand, and now you write on a stone, why?"

The other friend replied: "When someone hurts us, we should write it down in sand, where the winds of forgiveness can erase it, but when someone does something good for us, we must engrave it in stone, so no wind can ever erase it."



What's on?

MONDAY: THE FEAST OF ST MARGARET CLITHEROW

ALL WEEK: WE WILL BE HOLDING RECONCILIATION SERVICES. THESE ARE A CHANCE TO REFLECT ON THE THINGS WE HAVE DONE WRONG AND THE MISTAKES WE HAVE MADE, BUT ALSO CELEBRATE THE FACT THAT, DESPITE OUR MISTAKES, GOD FORGIVES US AND HIS LOVE FOR US NEVER CHANGES. THESE SERVICES WILL TAKE PLACE DURING ASSEMBLY TIME AND THEN, DURING P5 EACH DAY, EACH YEAR GROUP WILL BE INVITED TO RECEIVE GOD'S FORGIVENESS THROUGH THE SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION.

FRIDAY: LENTEN MORNING MASS, 8AM, CHAPEL.

FRIDAY: BREAKFAST WITH GOD



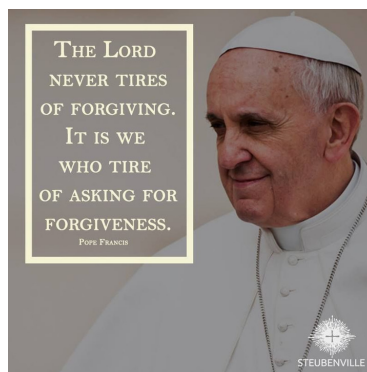
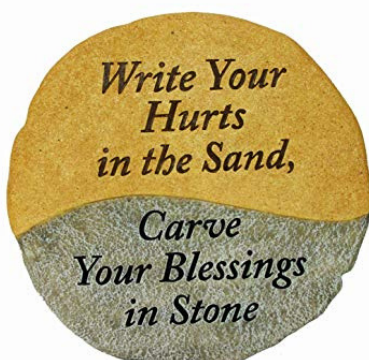
Something to talk about...

Discuss the following questions with the person next to you:

Are we quick to forgive others? Or do we hold grudges against people who have hurt us or upset us?

What can we learn from this story about the two friends?

How can we show compassion and mercy to others?



Something to do...

Is there someone in our lives who we need to reach out to with compassion and mercy?

Is there someone who we can forgive for something they may have done to hurt us?

Is there someone we need to seek forgiveness from?

Make yourself a promise to either offer forgiveness to someone or ask for forgiveness.