

# PRAYING *With* CHILDREN

## SUNDAY LITURGY

24<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time Year A - 13 September 2020



**"I did not say to you to forgive seven times, but seventy-seven times."**

### Something to Think About

Last week, our gospel story was about community. Today Jesus tells his disciples about the importance of forgiveness. To have a healthy and loving community, we must be willing to ask for forgiveness when we hurt others, and we must be willing to forgive other people.

### The Story

In today's scripture reading, Peter accepts that forgiveness is important, but he wants to know how many times he is expected to forgive. Surely Jesus wouldn't expect his followers to go on forgiving and forgiving and forgiving! But that's exactly what Jesus says. When Jesus tells Peter to forgive seventy-seven times, he means always!

### The Scriptures

**A Reading from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew 18:21-22**

Peter came up to the Lord and asked,  
"How many times should I forgive  
someone who does something wrong to me?  
Is seven times enough?"

Jesus answered:

"Not just seven times, but seventy-seven times!"

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

### Group Discussion

How does it feel to be forgiven? Can you remember a time that you were forgiven by your parents or siblings or friends?

What sorts of things could you say when you want to ask for forgiveness?  
(e.g. "I'm sorry". "I made a mistake". "Please forgive me". )

What are the words you can say to show that you forgive someone else?  
(e.g. "It's okay". "I forgive you". "Let's forget it". )

With a partner, practice saying sorry and receiving their words of forgiveness. Then swap and let your partner say sorry to you, and you can tell them that you forgive them.

## Praying For Others

*Leader:* Let us pray now for the leaders of our Church, our world, for those in our community and for our own needs.

*Reader:* We pray that our leaders will lead with justice and compassion. Lord, hear us.

**All: Lord, hear our prayer.**

*Reader:* We pray for victims of violence. Lord, hear us.

**All: Lord, hear our prayer.**

*Reader:* We pray for all children who are killed in wars. Lord, hear us.

**All: Lord, hear our prayer.**

*Reader:* We pray that we will learn to forgive. Lord, hear us.

**All: Lord, hear our prayer.**

*Leader:* Loving God, listen to the prayers we make in the name of Jesus.

**All: Amen.**

## Video

Click to watch the video.

[Forgiveness - Children](#)



## Group Activity

When we forgive someone, it doesn't only make that person feel better, it makes us feel better too! Being angry at someone is like carrying around a heavy weight in our heart. For this activity you will need a bag with a heart drawn or pasted on the outside, and some rocks. (If this activity is being done at home, children can be involved in a nature walk to collect the rocks).

The prayer leader sits in front of the children with the collection of rocks, and the bag with a heart drawn on it. Talk with the children about the fact that when people hurt us, we can feel angry. We might want to do something unkind to get that person back. The longer we hold on to what they have done, the heavier our heart becomes.

Children can take turns to carry the heavy bag, imagining that this is their heart when they are mad at someone. Give each child a turn to take a rock out of the bag while saying, "I will forgive". Then let each child carry the bag again, to feel how light their heart will be after they forgive.



## Prayer

Say this prayer together during the week.





**I'M  
SORRY!**

**I FORGIVE  
YOU!**



**OUR FATHER... FORGIVE US OUR SINS  
AS WE FORGIVE THOSE WHO SIN AGAINST US.**

Think of a time when you found it hard to forgive someone.

Draw or write what happened on a piece of paper.

**NOW, TO SHOW YOU HAVE FORGIVEN THAT PERSON...**

bury the paper in the garden in a secret place or

rip it up into lots of tiny pieces and throw it in the bin.