



“For this reason the Church has always venerated the Scriptures as she venerates the Lord’s Body. She never ceases to present to the faithful the Bread of Life, taken from the one table of God’s Word and Christ’s Body.” Dei Verbum, 21

## Twenty-Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time

**Reading 1 - Sirach 27: 30 - 28:7**

**Responsorial Psalm - Psalm 103: 1-2, 3-4, 9-10, 11-12**

**Reading 2 - Romans 14: 7-9**

**Gospel - Matthew 18: 21-35**

**Reading 1 - Sirach 27: 30 -28:7**

Wrath and anger, these also are abominations, yet a sinner holds on to them.

The vengeful will face the Lord’s vengeance; indeed he remembers their sins in detail.<sup>a</sup>

2

Forgive your neighbor the wrong done to you; then when you pray, your own sins will be forgiven.<sup>b</sup>

3

Does anyone nourish anger against another and expect healing from the LORD?<sup>c</sup>

4

Can one refuse mercy to a sinner like oneself,

yet seek pardon for one's own sins?

5

If a mere mortal cherishes wrath,  
who will forgive his sins?

6

Remember your last days and set enmity aside;  
remember death and decay, and cease from sin!

7

Remember the commandments and do not be angry  
with your neighbor;  
remember the covenant of the Most High, and  
overlook faults.

What advice does Sirach offer for helping you to let go of anger and forgive those who have hurt you?

## **Responsorial Psalm**

**The Lord is kind and merciful, slow to anger, and rich in compassion.**

Bless the Lord, O my soul;  
and all my being, bless his holy name.

Bless the Lord, O my soul,  
and forget not all his benefits.

He pardons all your iniquities,  
heals all your ills.

He redeems your life from destruction,  
he crowns you with kindness and  
compassion.

He will not always chide,  
nor does he keep his wrath forever.  
Not according to our sins does he deal  
with us,  
nor does he requite us according  
to our crimes.

For as the heavens are high above the earth,  
so surpassing is his kindness toward  
the who fear him.  
As far as the east is from the west,  
so far has he put our transgressions  
from us.

## **Reading 2 - Romans 14: 7-9**

None of us lives for oneself, and no one dies for  
oneself.

8

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.<sup>g</sup>

9

For this is why Christ died and came to life, that he  
might be Lord of both the dead and the living.

## What does Paul mean by Christ being the Lord of both the dead and the living?

Parallel text from Paul  
2 Cor 5 :15-19

He indeed died for all, so that those who live might no longer live for themselves but for him who for their sake died and was raised.<sup>j</sup>

16

Consequently,<sup>\*</sup> from now on we regard no one according to the flesh; even if we once knew Christ according to the flesh, yet now we know him so no longer.

17

<sup>k</sup> So whoever is in Christ is a new creation: the old things have passed away; behold, new things have come.

18

<sup>\*</sup> And all this is from God, who has reconciled us to himself through Christ and given us the ministry of reconciliation,

19

namely, God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting their trespasses against them and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation.

## Phillipians 2

Who,\* though he was in the form of God,<sup>d</sup>  
did not regard equality with God something to be  
grasped.\*

7

Rather, he emptied himself,  
taking the form of a slave,  
coming in human likeness;\*  
and found human in appearance,<sup>e</sup>

8

he humbled himself,<sup>f</sup>  
becoming obedient to death, even death on a cross.\*

9

Because of this, God greatly exalted him  
and bestowed on him the name\*  
that is above every name,<sup>g</sup>

10

that at the name of Jesus  
every knee should bend,\*  
of those in heaven and on earth and under the  
earth,<sup>h</sup>

11

and every tongue confess that  
Jesus Christ is Lord,\*  
to the glory of God the Father.<sup>i</sup>

## **Gospel - Matthew 16: 13-20**

Then Peter approaching asked him, “Lord, if my brother sins against me, how often must I forgive him? As many as seven times?”

22

\* Jesus answered, “I say to you, not seven times but seventy-seven times.”

23

o That is why the kingdom of heaven may be likened to a king who decided to settle accounts with his servants.

24

\* When he began the accounting, a debtor was brought before him who owed him a huge amount.

25

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.

26

\* At that, the servant fell down, did him homage, and said, ‘Be patient with me, and I will pay you back in full.’

27

Moved with compassion the master of that servant let him go and forgave him the loan.

28

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.'

29

Falling to his knees, his fellow servant begged him, 'Be patient with me, and I will pay you back.'

30

But he refused. Instead, he had him put in prison until he paid back the debt.

31

Now when his fellow servants saw what had happened, they were deeply disturbed, and went to their master and reported the whole affair.

32

His master summoned him and said to him, 'You wicked servant! I forgave you your entire debt because you begged me to.'

33

p Should you not have had pity on your fellow servant, as I had pity on you?'

34

Then in anger his master handed him over to the torturers until he should pay back the whole debt.\*

35

\* q So will my heavenly Father do to you, unless each of you forgives his brother from his heart.”

We have talked before about the significance of numbers in the Jewish tradition. What is Matthew trying to tell us by saying we need to forgive 70X7 times?

What does it mean to forgive from the heart?

**2843** Thus the Lord's words on forgiveness, the love that loves to the end, become a living reality. The parable of the merciless servant, which crowns the Lord's teaching on ecclesial communion, ends with these words: "So also my heavenly Father will do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother from your heart." It is there, in fact, "in the depths of the heart," that everything is bound and loosed. It is not in our power not to feel or to forget an offense; but the heart that offers itself to the Holy Spirit turns injury into compassion and purifies the memory in transforming the hurt into intercession.

Is it possible to forgive someone who is not sorry or repentant and may not even acknowledge any wrongdoing?

Is it possible to forgive someone who has died and no reconciliation was achieved during their lifetime?

