

Reflecting On Sunday's Readings

TWENTY-FOURTH SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIME — SEPTEMBER 13, 2020

First Reading — Sirach 27:30—28:7

³⁰ Anger and wrath, these also are abominations, and the sinful man will possess them. ^{28:1} He that takes vengeance will suffer vengeance from the Lord, and he will firmly establish his sins. ² Forgive your neighbor the wrong he has done, and then your sins will be pardoned when you pray. ³ Does a man harbor anger against another, and yet seek for healing from the Lord? ⁴ Does he have no mercy toward a man like himself, and yet pray for his own sins? ⁵ If he himself, being flesh, maintains wrath, who will make expiation for his sins? ⁶ Remember the end of your life, and cease from enmity, remember destruction and death, and be true to the commandments. ⁷ Remember the commandments, and do not be angry with your neighbor; remember the covenant of the Most High, and overlook ignorance

Responsorial Psalm

PS 103:1-2, 3-4, 9-10, 11-12

R. (8) 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.

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

He pardons all your iniquities,
heals all your ills.

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

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

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

For as the heavens are high above the earth,
so surpassing is his kindness toward those who
fear him.

As far as the east is from the west,
so far has he put our transgressions from us.

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

Second Reading — Romans 14:7-9

⁷ None of us lives to himself, and none of us dies to himself. ⁸ If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord; so then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. ⁹ For to this end Christ died and lived again, that he might be Lord both of the dead and of the living.

Gospel Reading — Matthew 18:21-35

²¹ Then Peter came up and said to him, "Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? As many as seven times?" ²² Jesus said to him, "I do not say to you seven times, but seventy times seven. ²³ "Therefore the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his servants. ²⁴ When he began the reckoning, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents; ²⁵ and as he could not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, with his wife and children and all that he had, and payment to be made. ²⁶ So the servant fell on his knees, imploring him, 'Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.' ²⁷ And out of pity for him the lord of that servant released him and forgave him the debt. ²⁸ But that same servant, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii; and seizing him by the throat he said, 'Pay what you owe.' ²⁹ So his fellow servant fell down and besought him, 'Have

Our Lady of Perpetual Help

patience with me, and I will pay you.' ³⁰He refused and went and put him in prison till he should pay the debt. ³¹When his fellow servants saw what had taken place, 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 servant! I forgave you all that debt because you besought me; ³³and should not you have had mercy on your fellow servant, as I had mercy on you?' ³⁴And in anger his lord delivered him to the jailers, till he should pay all his debt. ³⁵So also my heavenly Father will do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother from your heart."

Our Lady of Perpetual Help

INVITATION TO PRAY

Pause for a few moments of silence and enter more deeply into the presence of God...

Proclaim the Scriptures out loud

As you listen to the scriptures be attentive to a word, a phrase, a question, an image, or a feeling that emerges. Reflect on this quietly or share it aloud.

INVITATION TO REFLECT

INVITATION TO GROUP SHARING

First Reading —

1. What are the inherent dangers of remaining angry and unforgiving?
2. What does God's forgiveness mean to you personally?

Second Reading —

3. How should claiming that Jesus is our "Lord" affect both our forgiveness and our ability to forgive?

Gospel Reading —

4. In your mind what is the most difficult aspect of forgiving those who have offended you?
5. How does someone's unforgiving spirit affect each individual involved and the community to which they belong?
6. Verse 35 is a very powerful statement. Why do you think God put such a high premium on being a forgiving person?

INVITATION TO ACT

Determine a specific action (individual or group) that flows from your sharing. When choosing an individual action, determine what you will do and share it with the group. When choosing a group action, determine who will take responsibility for different aspects of the action. These should be your primary considerations.

CLOSING INVITATION TO PRAY

Give thanks to God (aloud or silently) for new insights, for desires awakened, for directions clarified, for the gift of one another's openness and sensitivity. Conclude with a final prayer.