

SEPTEMBER 13, 2020
FIFTEENTH SUNDAY
AFTER PENTECOST



The people of God forgive.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

These passages are related to the Lectionary texts for this Sunday.

Sunday	Matthew 18:21-35	A parable about forgiveness
Monday	Genesis 50:15-21	Joseph forgives his brothers
Tuesday	Romans 14:1-12	Do not judge another
Wednesday	Exodus 14:19-31	Crossing the Red Sea
Thursday	Psalms 114	The Lord works wonders
Friday	John 8:1-11	Jesus intercedes for a woman
Saturday	Psalms 103:1-13	Thanksgiving for God's goodness
Sunday	Matthew 20:1-16	Parable of the vineyard workers

SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

Bless the LORD, O my soul, and do not forget all his benefits—who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases.

Psalm 103:2-3 (NRSV)

PRAYERS AND BLESSING

A Prayer for the Week:

Gracious God, we praise you for your desire to forgive; help us to love and forgive as we are loved and forgiven through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Mealtime Prayer:

Come, Lord Jesus, be our guest; let these gifts to us be blessed. Let there be a goodly share on every table, everywhere. Amen.

A Blessing to Give:

May the forgiveness of God bless you with steadfast love and mercy. (Psalm 103:4)



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HYMN OF THE WEEK
Healer of Our Every Ill



WEEKLY MILESTONES

Take a moment to tell or think about a recent mountain high and/or valley low in your life.

CARING CONVERSATIONS

Discuss in your home, small group, or use for personal reflections:

- What does forgiveness mean to you? Give an example.
- Was there ever a time when you could not forgive someone? Explain.
- How is God's forgiveness a gift to you? to the church? to the world?

DEVOTIONS

Read: Matthew 18:21-35.

Jesus presents a very unreal story to make a very real point. In Jesus' day, each talent was worth more than 15 years of work. Therefore, one slave owed over 150,000 years of income while the other owed one hundred days of wages (a denarius was one day's wage). The differences are extreme to make the point that God's forgiveness of us is wildly out-of-this-world and wonderful. It leads the follower of Jesus Christ to sing or pray Psalm 103 that begins, "Bless the LORD, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name" (v. 1). A concrete way to praise God is to "forgive your brother or sister from your heart" (Matthew 18:35) and do so again and again (v. 22). Or, as Jesus suggests, do you want to consider the consequences of not showing a little forgiveness to others? That lack of forgiveness Jesus says, would destroy your life (vv. 34-35). How can you praise God today by forgiving someone who has offended or hurt you? How does this parable help bring joy to your soul?

Pray: **Merciful God, give me faith to remember how kind and generous you are to me and to praise you by being kind and forgiving to others through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

SERVICE

Genesis 50:15-21 is the story of Joseph forgiving his brothers for throwing him in a pit and selling him into slavery. Forgiving someone who has hurt you is not easy. Think of someone who needs your forgiveness. Pray for that person. Reflect on God's love and mercy shown through people like Joseph and write a note of forgiveness to that person.

RITUALS AND TRADITIONS

Forgiveness is the theme this week in Bible readings, caring conversations, devotions, and service. Breaking a plate, saying something mean, and telling a lie are things we may not mean to do, but they happen. Think of a time when you needed to be forgiven. God forgives us again and again. Think about what this means to you. Pray the Lord's Prayer, pause as you pray, "forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us", then finish the prayer.



In addition to *Taking Faith Home*, celebrate milestones in your daily life as an effective faith formation tool. Go to: www.milestonesministry.org