

The Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost

Mt.18:23-35

Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, which would take account of his servants. And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him, which owed him ten thousand talents. But forasmuch as he had not to pay, his lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife, and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made. The servant therefore fell down, and worshipped him, saying, Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. Then the lord of that servant was moved with compassion, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt. But the same servant went out, and found one of his fellowservants, which owed him an hundred pence: and he laid hands on him, and took him by the throat, saying, Pay me that thou owest. And his fellowservant fell down at his feet, and besought him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. And he would not: but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt. So when his fellowservants saw what was done, they were very sorry, and came and told unto their lord all that was done. Then his lord, after that he had called him, said unto him, O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me: Shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellowservant, even as I had pity on thee? And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him. So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses (KJV)

The Gospel is proclaimed in the Church at each Divine Liturgy for the salvation of our souls and for the glory of God. The Gospel is to be applied to daily life and is always relevant.

The present Gospel describes the value of mercy and forgiveness in personal relationships. The king forgave his servant who was indebted to him. The forgiven servant did not show the same mercy and forgiveness to a fellow servant.

During our lifetime, we as believers turn to the Lord God seeking forgiveness through prayer and Holy Confession countless times. When we are sincere, the Lord God grants forgiveness.

When we are forgiven by God for our sins and trespasses, we are compelled to ask ourselves if we show the same compassion and forgiveness to the others in our daily lives.

The present Gospel shows we are held accountable for our actions. The servant forgiven by the king paid a price for not forgiving his fellow servant indebted to him.

When we seek forgiveness and are forgiven, we are expected to forgive others. Forgiveness enables relationships to be maintained and strengthened. Forgiveness fosters growth in existing relationships.

When husbands and wives forgive each other, the marriage grows and matures. When hardness of heart and failure to forgive prevails, relationships deteriorate.

Forgiveness is an integral part of parish life. The priest hears confessions and grants the forgiveness in accord with the teachings and practices of the Church. Parishioners are expected to be forgiving with each other and with the priest.

The Christian life intends continuous unity with and growth in Christ. Every Christian is a sinner and benefits from God's forgiveness and mercy. Unity and growth in Christ is possible in life only with repentance and forgiveness.

The stress of sins and hardness of heart accumulates and becomes overwhelming unless the believer seeks forgiveness and is forgiving of others. Seeking forgiveness and being forgiving is healthy for daily life and for the soul.

The Lord God desires believers to repent and seek forgiveness. Joy arises in heaven when the believer repents and seeks forgiveness. (Lk. 15:7) Families experience joy when forgiveness and mercy thrive in the home.

On occasion sons and daughters during their growth process will act in ways that are concerning to their parents. Wise parents know when and how to forgive sons and daughters as they mature in life and take responsibility for their actions.

Discerning husbands and wives know that the marriage will never fully mature and become Christ-pleasing unless forgiveness and mercy are practiced with each other consistently.

The pressures of daily living are stressful for present day families. The best decisions are not always made. Mistakes occur in raising children. Words are said in the home that at times should never be said.

The Lord God is willing to forgive the believer repenting of regrettable actions. Believers are expected to follow the Lord's example and teachings in practicing forgiveness.

The heart becomes full when a family member repents. Joy returns to the home when family members forgive each other and embrace in loving kindness. The workplace thrives when employers forgive erring and repentant employees.

The Church is where to learn, experience and practice forgiveness. The Church is where Jesus Christ is most fully experienced. Jesus Christ's forgiveness of sins leads to new life and eventually to eternal life.

The Gospel offers nourishment in the Church on a regular basis. The Gospel's nourishment addresses and satisfies the hunger of the soul. The Gospel's nourishment fosters growth in the Lord Jesus Christ throughout life.

Peace in the heart, mind and soul are found in and through the Gospel. Believers learn about Christ's birth, life on earth, His transfiguration, death and resurrection through the Gospel.

In the Church believers experience the Transfigured, Crucified and Resurrected Christ. Life is renewed in Christ in the Church through forgiveness of sins and partaking of the Precious Body and Blood of Christ.