

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 present Gospel is a lasting lesson in forgiveness. Our personal relationships in and outside the home are to be governed by the forgiveness taught in the present Gospel.

Every person is indebted to the Lord God. Every person fails to fully repay the Lord for all that has been given to each of us. The gifts and talents of life are not always used in ways pleasing to God.

Believers often seek forgiveness from God. If a believer seeks forgiveness from God and expects forgiveness, then the believer is to be equally forgiving in personal relationships.

Parents have the responsibility to forgive sons and daughters. Sons and daughters are responsible for forgiving their parents. In the workplace, employers improve employee morale and work conditions by being forgiving.

Employees forgiving their employers strengthen the mutual relationships. The present Gospel is intended to impact believers. Believers hearing today's Gospel message are to apply it to daily relationships.

Relationships affect where believers will experience eternity. (Mt.25:31-46) Jesus Christ's love has a place in daily relationships. Love for one another is valued in the Christian life.

Love is expressed through forgiveness. Forgiveness is a way to strengthen relationships. Forgiveness develops relationships and makes them healthier, stronger and more enduring.

God's Holy Church offers learning for all the days of life. Each Gospel reading provides lessons for the healthy life in Jesus Christ. Believers grow in Christ by being attentive to the Gospel.

Jesus' known words and teachings are proclaimed in the Gospel. Jesus' words and teachings implanted in the heart strengthen the believer. Believers are nourished directly when attentive to the Gospel.

Addressing the hunger in the soul motivates believers to seek nourishment. Authentic nourishment comes from Jesus Christ. The Church provides the authentic nourishment needed for all of life.

The Church addresses the believer's needs from the time of Baptism until departure from earthly life. The Church is the pathway to eternal life in Christ. Believers learn of God's Kingdom in the Church and the path to the Kingdom.

The Church offers a foretaste to the Kingdom. Each Divine Liturgy is a foretaste of God's Kingdom. Believers actively participating in the Divine Liturgy experience nourishment from and unity with Jesus Christ.

The Holy Scriptures are a source of nourishment for all of life. Wise individuals take time to study the Holy Scriptures. Studying the Scriptures is an investment in the Kingdom of God.

Investing in the Kingdom of God is the most secure and beneficial investment. Investments in the Kingdom of God are protected from corruption or theft. (Mt.6:19)-20) Wise individuals invest the time and treasures of life in the Kingdom of God.

Life comes from God. Life's talents and treasures come from God. Showing gratitude to God is the believer's responsibility. Investing the gift of life and treasures of life in God's Kingdom is responsible behavior.

The person forgiven by the king in the current Gospel had the responsibility to be grateful for the forgiveness he received. Each person has reason to be grateful to God for life, talents and gifts in life. God is patient and forgiving with each person

Today is the day to think carefully about life, and the talents and gifts from God. Now is the time to be grateful for God's forgiveness. Demonstrating love and forgiveness towards others is a way to show gratitude to God.

Practicing forgiveness and patience with others validates God's teachings in the Gospel. God forgives believers more than is realized. The journey to God's Kingdom continues with each small step of following the lessons in the Gospel. Jesus said: "Blessed are they who hear the word of God and keep it." (Lk.11:28)

The Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost. Holy Martyrs Adrian and his wife Natalia. August 26/September 8, 2024. Hidden Valley, Pennsylvania.

Father Rodney Torbic