

## The Work of the People

### *The Twenty-fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time*

Let us continue to remember in prayer all those whose lives were changed so dramatically by the recent hurricanes, wild fires, and the corona virus pandemic. While we certainly experience weather challenges, they do not compare to what the people of the gulf coast or California have gone through – a burden they will continue to bear in these next several months.

Today's First Reading from Sirach continues the topic of forgiving our brothers and sisters. The authors advice, which he gives through theoretical questions, is prudent: Do not grow angry and expect healing from the Lord; do not withhold forgiveness and expect God to forgive you; do not value rage against another in the hopes of your own forgiveness. The author voices the commandment to love in negative terms: do not hate your neighbor. Always remember the covenant and move forward from each other's faults in mercy.

This is the final Sunday we read from Paul's letter to the Romans. The brief two verses are from the next to last chapter in the letter. These verses are a summation of sorts of Paul's theology in this letter. We belong to no one or nothing else but Christ. Without repeating the reason for why we belong to him, the Romans and we know that it is because through God's grace, Christ freely justifies us. Through Baptism, we died and rose with Christ, and in our new life in Christ, we live for no other. When we die, we also die for the Lord. We live and die in faith. The totality of our new personhood is in Christ.

Today's Gospel is a continuous reading of Matthew from where last Sunday's Gospel left off. Jesus had taught his disciples a process for extending forgiveness to one who sins. Peter now asked Jesus to quantify how many times he must forgive someone. Jesus' numerical response shows that forgiveness is infinite. He then proceeds to tell the parable about a servant whose master offered loan forgiveness, but in turn, the servant refused to forgive a fellow servant. "Forgive" is Jesus' message. How could something be so simple and difficult at the same time?

The reflection for this Sunday is from Pope Francis's *Meditation of Assisi* which he delivered on August 4, 2016.

God's forgiveness knows no limits; it is greater than anything we can imagine, and it comes to all who know in their hearts that they have done wrong and desire to return to him. God looks at the heart that seeks forgiveness.

The problem, unfortunately, comes whenever we have to deal with a brother or sister who has even slightly offended us. The reaction described in the parable describes it perfectly: "He seized him by the throat and said, 'Pay what you

owe!'" (Matt 18:28). Here we encounter all the drama of our human relationships. When we are indebted to others, we expect mercy; but when others are indebted to us, we demand justice! All of us do this. It is a reaction unworthy of Christ's disciples, nor is it the sign of a Christian style of life. Jesus teaches us to forgive and to do so limitlessly: "I do not say to you seven times, but seventy-seven times" (v. 22). What he offers us is the Father's love, not our own claims to justice. To trust in the latter alone would not be the sign that we are Christ's disciples who have obtained mercy at the foot of the cross solely by virtue of the love of the Son of God. Let us not forget, then, the harsh saying at the end of the parable: "So also my heavenly Father will do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother from your heart" (v. 35).

### READINGS FOR THE WEEK

Monday: Nm. 21:4b-9/Phil. 2:6-11/Jn. 3:13-17  
 Tuesday: 1 Cor. 12:12-14, 27-31a/Jn. 19:25-27 or Lk. 2:33-35  
 Wednesday: 1 Cor. 12:31; 13:13/Lk. 7:31-35  
 Thursday: 1 Cor. 15:1-11/Lk. 7:36-50  
 Friday: 1 Cor. 15:12-20/Lk. 8:1-3  
 Saturday: 1 Cor. 15:35-37, 42-49/Lk. 8:4-15  
 Sunday: Is. 55:6-9/Phil. 1:20c-24, 27a/Mt. 20:1-16a

### FAITH FORMATION CLASSES

The Faith Formation Student Registration Forms have been mailed to parish families. Please be sure to return the completed form as soon as possible. Thank you in advance.

### A FAMILY PERSPECTIVE

Unable to forgive another means we are holding on to a past wrong and hoping for a better past. That is not going to happen. We must move on with our life by accepting we are unjustly treated and it will not be corrected. We aren't condoning the injustice. We just don't let it control our lives any longer. Forgiveness is critical to living a healthy life in the present.

*"Jesus, help me to see how holy you are.  
 Despite my sins, I love you, Lord."*

## WORSHIP

Monday, September 14  
 8:00 am + John Auer  
 Tuesday, September 15  
 8:00 am + Tom & Kathryn Bailey (Shawn Pflieger)  
 Wednesday, September 16  
 8:00 am + AT ST. BERNADETTE MISSION  
 Louise Rembielak (Joan Rembielak & Phyllis Wronko)  
 Thursday, September 17  
 8:00 am + Joe Yusavage (Family)  
 Friday, September 18  
 8:30 am + William & Martha Brown (Joyce Adams)  
 Saturday, September 19  
 4:30 pm + Kenny Teague (Dale & Carole Schoiack)  
 Sunday, September 20  
 8:00 am + AT ST. BERNADETTE MISSION  
 Living & Deceased Parishioners  
 9:30 am + AT ST. ANTHONY OF PADUA  
 Susan Martin (Kathy Yanoshik, Sister)

## PARISH EVENTS CALENDAR

Tuesday, September 15  
 After Mass - St. Anthony Novena  
 Saturday, September 19  
 3:30 - 4:15 pm - Confession  
 Sunday, September 20  
 Before Mass - Confession - ST. BERNADETTE MISSION  
 After Mass - Confession - ST. ANTHONY OF PADUA

**CHILD PROTECTION AND CREATING SAFE ENVIRONMENTS - DIOCESAN CHILD PROTECTION POLICIES:** The Diocese of Erie, along with all other dioceses in the United States, has policies and procedures in place to address the national problem of child abuse and to aid in maintaining safe environments. The three main components of the Policy for the Protection of Children are: screening of all employees and volunteers who work with minors, training of all youth, parents, employees and volunteers, and reporting all suspected child abuse. The diocese is committed to promptly reporting any suspected child abuse directly to ChildLine or law enforcement. The diocese requires ongoing screening and training of all personnel, paid or unpaid, who have regular contact with our children and youth under the age of 18. The diocese also requires yearly safe environment training of our children, youth and parents regarding touching safety and safe environments. Visit <https://www.eriecd.org/childprotection/> to read the policy and learn what the diocese requires for all personnel who work with children and youth in parishes/schools/agencies.

*“Father,  
 help me to let go of wrath and anger.  
 I don’t want to refuse mercy to anyone.  
 Teach me how to forgive!”*

### CATHOLIC EDUCATION COLLECTION

Dear Brothers and Sister in Christ,

I ask for your support of the Catholic Education Collection being held on the weekend of September 19-20.

This annual second collection supports lifelong education and faith formation opportunities for everyone throughout our entire diocese. Catechesis is not only for children. We are all called to deepen our faith.

Please generously support this collection. Half of the funds raised from this collection remain in your parish to support its education and faith formation programs.

The other half funds diocesan wide faith efforts including leadership training and conferences for those engaged in ministry as well as tuition assistance for families attending Catholic schools. A small portion also supports the Catholic University of America which promotes Catholic Social Teaching and the training of priests, religious and lay leaders.

Thank you for your generosity. Contributions can be made directly to your parish. Be assured of my prayers for you and your family. With every best wish, I remain,

Sincerely yours in Christ,  
 The Most Reverend Lawrence T. Persico, JCL  
 Bishop of Erie

### NOTE

You will find the envelope for the Catholic Education Collection in your envelope box with the regular collection envelopes for the week of September 19-20.

#### STEWARDSHIP - ST. BERNADETTE MISSION

Offertory	\$710.00
Maintenance	170.00
Candles	44.00
Catholic Educ.	30.00
Mission Cooperative	<u>30.00</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$984.00</b>

Catholic Services Appeal  
 Pledged: \$5,565    Paid: \$5,315

#### STEWARDSHIP - ST. ANTHONY OF PADUA

Offertory	\$1,167.00
Maintenance	460.00
Candles	30.00
Catholic Educ.	10.00
CSA	<u>685.00</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$2,352.00</b>

Catholic Services Appeal  
 Pledged: \$26,336    Paid: \$24,271

**CHURCH NAME: ST. ANTONY OF PADUA**

**CHURCH NO.:**

**SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS:**

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