

24th Sunday of Ordinary Time

Sirach 27:30--28:9
Ps 103:1-4, 9-12
Romans 14:7-9
Matthew 18:21-35

Monday September 14 Exaltation of Holy Cross

Numbers 21:4b-9
Ps 78:1bc-2,34-38
Philippians 2:6-11
John 3:13-17

Tuesday September 15 Our Lady of Sorrows

1 Corinth 12:12-14,27-31a
Ps 100:1b-5
John 19:25-27
or Luke 2:33-35

Wednesday September 16 Sts. Cornelius & Cyprian

1 Corinthians 12:31 – 13:13
Ps 33:2-5,12,22
Luke 7:31-35

Thursday September 17

1 Corinthians 15:1-11
Ps 118:1b-2,16ab-17,28
Luke 7:36-50

Friday September 18

1 Corinthians 15:12-20
Ps 17:1,6-7,8b,15
Luke 8:1-3

Saturday September 19

1 Corinth 15:35-37,42-49
Ps 56:10c-14
Luke 8:4-15

Jesus' message in this Sunday's Gospel reading explains a line from the "Our Father" prayer he had taught earlier (Matthew 6:12): "Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us."

The strongest word here is "AS" – the same as, just like, in equal measure.

If there is anyone we have not forgiven, if there is anyone we cannot pray for with love, we'd better keep our mouths shut during this part of the prayer to our Father, who is the Father of all.

Sometimes, it's difficult to forgive because we think "forgiving" means "forgetting". Jesus never said that we must forget what the debtor owes. Forgiveness means remembering – and learning from the memory – without demanding repayment or retribution.

Unforgiveness is a form of punishment: it's payback time. For example, if we remain angry, we hope that our anger or coldness will somehow punish the sinner into re-

pentance. Well, guess what. That never works.

Here's something else we do that never works: holding a grudge to protect ourselves from getting hurt again. Grudges do not free us from the pain of bad memories. It chains us to them.



When we free others from the debts they owe us for hurting us (whether they seek it or not, whether they're still alive or not), we free ourselves and our healing begins – *our* healing!

It's the most loving gift that we can give to ourselves, as it's a gift of love to others. Even when they don't recognize our gift, God does.

Reflect & Discuss:

1. Who angers you because they don't deserve your forgiveness?
2. What are you gaining from unforgiveness and resentment? What will you lose if you forgive?
3. What is the most difficult part of forgiveness?
4. What steps do you take for pushing yourself into truly letting go of unforgiveness so you can find healing? Sharing this with others will spread good ideas that could change someone's life!