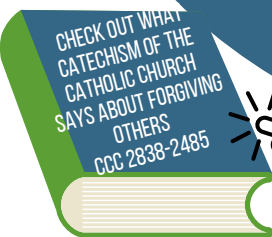




What Forgiveness Means

“To love means loving the unlovable. To forgive means pardoning the unpardonable. Faith means believing the unbelievable. Hope means hoping when everything seems hopeless.”
GK Chesterton



FORGIVE US OUR TRESPASSES AS WE FORGIVE THOSE WHO TRESPASS AGAINST US

WHAT DO YOU THINK ARE THE HARDEST CHRISTIAN TEACHINGS TO LIVE OUT?





WHAT DO YOU THINK FORGIVENESS MEANS? HOW DO YOU KNOW IF YOU HAVE FORGIVEN SOMEONE?

WATCH THIS VIDEO FROM FR MIKE SCHMITZ "FORGIVENESS" AND REFLECT ON THE QUESTIONS THAT FOLLOW



What does Fr Mike claim is one of the most radical teachings of Christianity?

What do we pray at the centre of the Our Father?



WHAT FORGIVENESS MEANS (AND WHAT IT DOESN'T MEAN!)



- Forgiveness doesn't mean you're no longer _____.
- Forgiveness doesn't mean you have to be _____ with this person again.
- Forgiveness doesn't mean that you _____ them.

When you forgive, why do you **not** have to feel like you have forgiven someone?

When you forgive, why do you **not** have to feel like you are hurt anymore?

When you forgive, why do you **not** have to feel like you should trust them again?

WE CAN UNDERSTAND FORGIVENESS IN TERMS OF JUSTICE.

Justice = what I _____
or what another person _____.



IN TERMS OF FORGIVENESS THAT MEANS:
"I'M NOT GOING TO MAKE YOU PAY BACK
WHAT YOU OWE ME."

Retell the parable of the unforgiving servant in your own words:



STEPS TO FORGIVING SOMEONE:

- 1 (JUSTICE) Write down: _____
- 2 (FORGIVENESS) Look at list and say: _____

WHAT FORGIVENESS MEANS [LUKE 6:27-38](#)



Forgiveness gives us the freedom to _____.

Forgiveness is a big deal, so before we do any of these steps we need to ask for God's grace, for the Holy Spirit to help us, for Jesus to guide our thoughts and actions, and to trust in the Father.



BONUS



Watch the short YouTube clip, [The Story of Jennifer Trapuzzano](#).

How do you react to Jennifer's ability to forgive in this situation?

Try to find any other incredible stories of forgiveness to share with others!



Now Read Luke 6:27-38



This Gospel passage is a continuation of Jesus' Sermon on the Plain (or on the Mount depending on which Gospel you are reading). He holds up for us an incredibly high standard of living - the Christian standard: love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who treat you badly. This is tough, really tough! Is it impossible? By human standards, yes, but by God's grace, thankfully no. Jesus calls us to love and view others as He does if we want to call ourselves a follower of His. Jesus calls us to give and not count the cost, or as we looked at in Fr Mike's video, to count the cost and still forgive. This passage directly follows the Beatitudes, the path to joy Jesus promises us. Lack of forgiveness can enslave us, hold our hearts hostage, eat away at our joy and our ability to love. This is not living life to the full. This is not a path to joy. Jesus also knows we're weak and frail. He modelled for us how to live this way by His own life and death. He promises us all the help that we need. If we wait until we feel like doing any of this, that feeling may never come. Love is a decision, forgiveness is a decision. If you are struggling to forgive, make a decision to set your heart free, by God's grace.



MISSION!

ARE THERE PEOPLE IN YOUR LIFE THAT YOU STRUGGLE TO FORGIVE? PEOPLE WHO HAVE WRONGED YOU AND HURT YOU? PEOPLE WHO OWE YOU A DEBT, WHO HAVE COST YOU SOMETHING IN YOUR LIFE? IF YOU FEEL LIKE YOU CAN START THE PROCESS OF FORGIVENESS, FOLLOW FR MIKE'S ADVICE. IF YOU STRUGGLE WITH THAT, BEGIN BY PRAYING FOR THE GRACE TO WANT TO FORGIVE THEM, AND COMMIT TO THAT PRAYER.



PRAYER TIME!

Jesus, You are the source of all joy and peace. You know that there are areas of my life and people in my life that have caused me pain, and it' can be difficult for me to forgive. I'm not sure if right now I even want to forgive. But I pray now for the grace to want to let your healing into my life. To make room for Your healing, I know there are things I need to let go of. Fill my heart with Your love, and grant me the grace I need to decide to take a step towards forgiveness today, no matter how small that step may be. Amen



CREATE A PLAYLIST TO LISTEN TO AS YOU REFLECT ON FORGIVENESS



- Forgiveness - Matthew West
- From the Inside Out - Hillsong
- O Come to the Altar - Elevation Worship
- Forgive our sins as we forgive - Koine Music
- A Heart that Forgives - Kevin Levar
- Forgive - This Hope Music
- Love Your Enemies - Kyle Sigmon
- Bless those who curse - Robert Martin
- O God Forgive Us - For King & Country
- Letting Go - Jeremy Camp

Click the links for the YouTube videos to listen to some suggestions!



Fr Mike Schmitz: Why is it so hard to forgive yourself?



Witness of Mercy: The Story of Jennifer Trapuzzano