

From the Desk of Deacon Dave

March 17 2020 St Paddy's day and forgiveness

Our Lenten journey from a scriptural perspective is filled with stories that are important for our soul, during this time of, atonement and reflection. Today's Gospel is one such example, with forgiveness being its focus. Webster's dictionary describes forgiveness as, "to give up resentment or claim to requital on account of, to remit as an offence, debt or fine, or penalty, to cease to feel resentment against; or, to free from a claim or the consequences of an injurious act or crime."

It's quite a mouthful and for good reason, because, I think this is what God intended, because, for me, forgiveness is one of the most difficult things to offer and to get past. Is it like that for you? I've heard it said, forgiveness is easy, it's forgetting that's hard. And, I wonder, if you can't forget, does that mean you haven't truly forgiven someone, because, Webster's also describes forgetting as, "to lose the remembrance of, to let go from memory, to cease to have in mind." Maybe we aren't meant to forget completely, to protect ourselves from the same thing happening to us again.

Because, no one wants to be taken advantage of, spoken down to, verbally abused or, hurt in some way, that, we have all experienced at one time or another. And, maybe we should feel just as bad or worse if we are on the giving end of things against our human sisters and brothers. I wonder, are we forgiven as easily, if someone else is on the receiving end? I think, because, God does know our nature, that's why Christ says to forgive, 77 times. But, it isn't simply an exercise in multiplication.

We are asked, like the disciples, to think beyond the earthly realm, of the laws, that, Moses taught and focus instead on kingdom-thinking! I don't know about you, but, even, 7 times, seems like a lot to forgive someone, when once should be enough? But, I think, we have to remember, what is really being said; that, it is more about restoring communion with God and acting as the Lord would and not keeping track of how many times we forgive.

Given that we are in the Lenten season, our focus should be not only about forgiving as many times as it takes to restore our connection with God, but to do our very best to forget, what hurts, us most, bubbling just under the surface of our lives! Let's all do our best and not make it regret!