

Welcome to The Church of the Sacred Heart

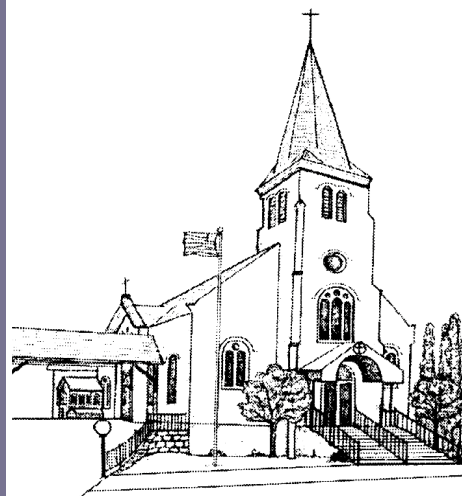
The Mother Church of East Central Minnesota

Parish Office / Mailing Address:
415 West 5th Street

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Phone: 320.358.4370 Fax: 866.779.1580 Wey Hall: 320.358.3145

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Weekend & Weekday Masses

Saturday-Temporarily Suspended

Sunday 9:00 am

Wednesday 9:00 am

Private Prayers:

Wednesdays, Thursdays and Sundays-
8:30-Noon

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament:

Every Wednesday after 9:00 am Mass
until Noon

Sacrament of Reconciliation:

Confessions will be heard by request
after mass on Wednesdays or
by appointment.

Clergy

Pastor:

Fr. Shane Stoppel-Wasinger

Assisting Priest:

Fr. Chuck Brambilla

Fr. Thomas Fitzgerald

Office Hours:

Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday
8:00 am. - 12:00 pm.

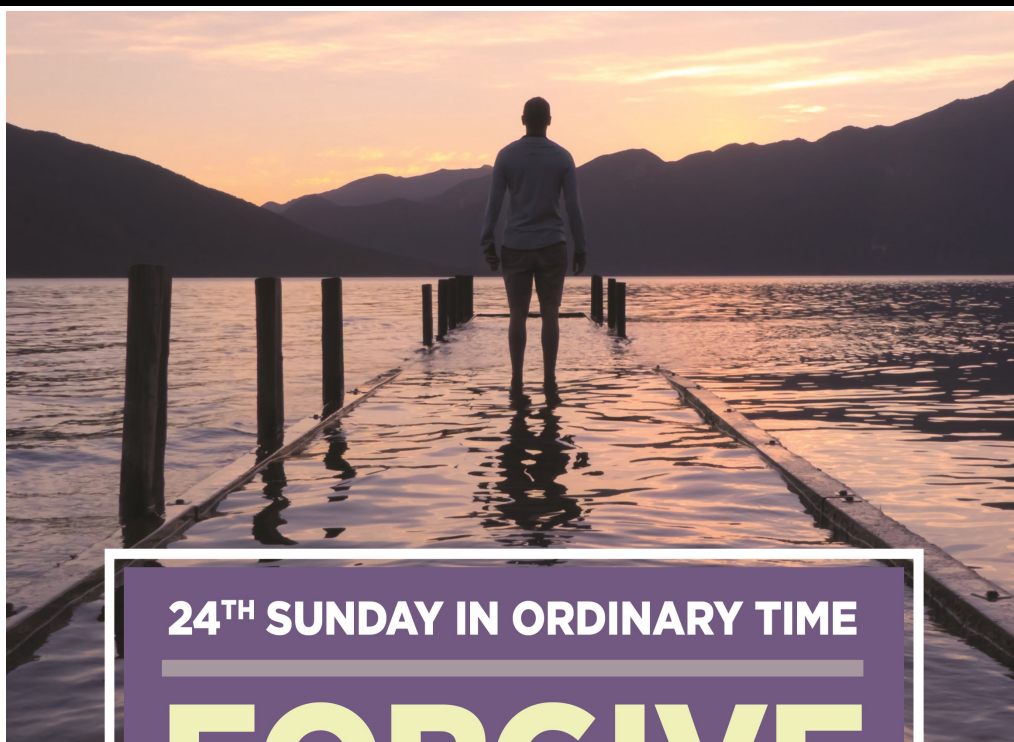
Parish Staff Contacts

Admin Asst: Marsha Marcussen

Bookkeeper/ Music: Steve Yurick

Faith Formation: Claire Kind

Minister Scheduling: Amy Prickett
612-716-9147



24TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

FORGIVE

**"So will my heavenly Father
do to you, unless each of
you forgives your brother
from your heart." - Mt 18:35**

Excerpts from the Lectionary for Mass ©2001, 1998, 1970 CCD.

Twenty-Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time, September 13, 2020

In Matthew 18: 21-35, we hear about the importance of how we are to be forgiving. As Catholic Christians this is nothing new to us, yet we live in a society that so often does not recognize the significance of forgiving one another. It is often said that the United States is becoming less and less of a Christian country. And yes, this statement has some merit to it.

For instance, our country has the highest incarceration rate based on 100,000 citizens per capita. For too often, if a person commits a crime, we believe we must punish them by sending the individual to prison. We feel that we are justified in making a judgement of another and this entitles us to not forgive them for their wrong doings. Don't get me wrong, people need to face the consequences of their actions due to the choices they made, however, all in all, we seem to be an unforgiving nation.

It seems many of us do not take ownership of our poor actions and tend to place the blame on others. Why do we judge others and why do we place blame on others for any poor choices that we too may also have made at some point in time?

There are times that someone has legitimately hurt or wronged us; but they still need to be forgiven. As we heard from our Gospel reading this weekend. Jesus tells Peter, "I say to you, not seven times but seventy-seven times". Meaning, there is not a limit to how many times we are to forgive others. Just *forgive!* When we forgive, we will feel at peace. Forgiving does not mean we approve of the wrongdoing; it means we show mercy. To



hold a grudge or have resentments, only hurts us! We are called to be forgiving at *all* times without placing judgement. Let me say that again... We are called to be forgiving at *all* times, without placing judgement.

I have watched students misbehaving or being disrespectful, only to find out they were acting out due to a poor situation within their home. Far too many times, I have made a quick judgement about others, only to learn later the entirety of the situation. Now, before making any judgement, I *really* try to understand the behavior behind the action, before taking any action to correct the situation. Part of the problem why we may not forgive someone else, is that we cannot forgive ourselves for something that we may have done. We must forgive ourselves if we want to be able to forgive others.

Remember, we forgive others so that our sins may be forgiven by God. If we don't forgive, God won't forgive us. We need to take the advice from the Book of Sirach that was our first reading this weekend, "Forgive your neighbor's injustice; then when you pray, *your* sins will be forgiven."

Forgiveness is not easy. It can feel more painful than the wound we suffered. To forgive someone does not mean your character is weak, it means your character is strong. Remember, there can be no peace without forgiveness.

May you all be shown God's mercy,
Father Shane

Gospel Meditation

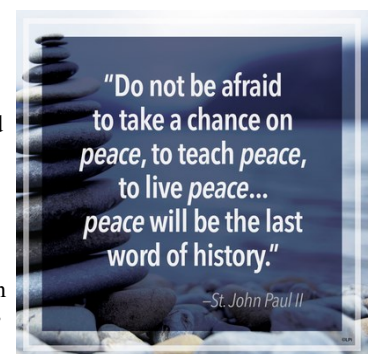
What right do we have to limit the amount and degree of forgiveness we show to others when we are so desperately in need of it ourselves? In not wanting someone who hurt us to downplay or forget the gravity of their wrong, we cling to anger, resentment, and wrath as a way of maintaining control. It is a way to acknowledge and express our deep hurt. We fail to realize that in doing so we hold ourselves hostage to these destructive feelings and actually become mired in the bondage of sin. All we gain is further alienation from ourselves, others, and especially God. We are no longer free but tethered to all of this unresolved negativity. Don't we really want to let it go? The fact is that we need to.

A good self-reflective posture will quickly show us that when the shoe is on the other foot and we are the ones in need of forgiveness, we desire it above anything else. This is especially true with our relationship with God. It is hypocritical to want one thing for ourselves and something else for another. Yet, many act in precisely this way.

Perhaps we think that in offering forgiveness, even for the most grievous of wrongs, somehow excuses the person of their wrong and makes it almost acceptable. This is what makes revenge, retaliation, and punishment so attractive. We see forgiveness as being an eraser that easily wipes away the offense without consequence. Or, we may believe that in offering forgiveness I must somehow forget the wrong and open myself as a victim of even greater possible hurts in the future. In fact, forgiving my sister or brother of their wrongful actions or attitudes involves none of this. It does not erase anything or position me vulnerably as a doormat to be walked on.

Forgiveness is an act of freedom that restores honest dialogue, shares true, and heartfelt feelings and acknowledges the consequences of an action. It admits that the wrong has caused a hurt that must be healed and squarely positions responsibility on the offender. The act of forgiveness recognizes our sinfulness and brokenness. It also admits that the most saintly among us is capable of doing very grave and deep harm to another person. It sees that we all can be victims of our passions and works in progress that deserve unlimited chances to get it right. With forgiveness, I release myself from the bonds of negativity and pursue a path of restoration, wholeness, and healing. I do not forget the wrong nor do I dismiss it. Sometimes, we have to stay far away from the one who hurt us. But we can still heal internally and be free.

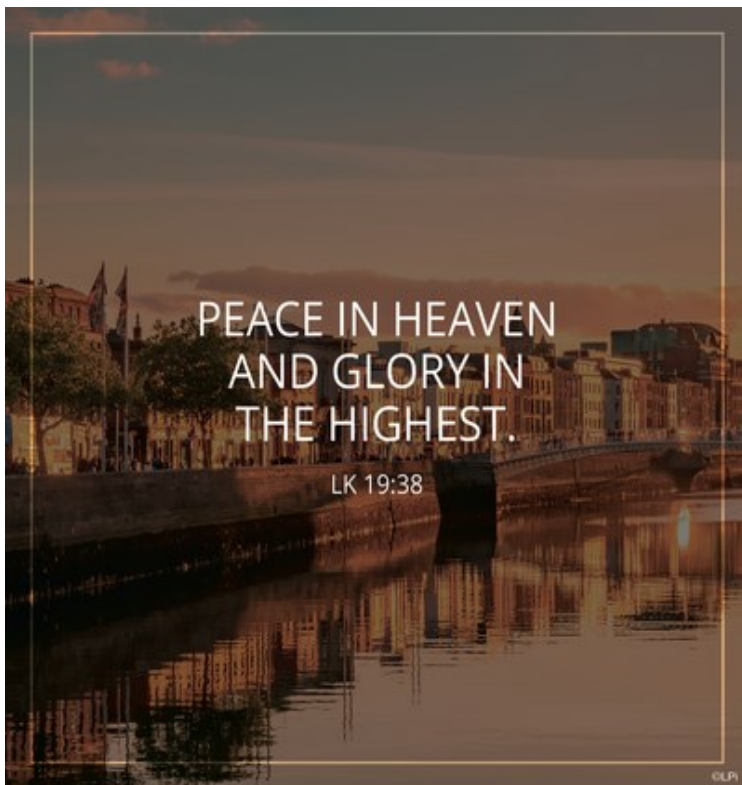
For the one who wants to be forgiven and the one who needs offer forgiveness, the journey can be an adventure in learning what brought us to this place and what is needed to move forward. This is exactly how God treats us. Why would we not want to do the same for others?



Live the Liturgy -

Inspiration of the week

Deciding to travel the challenging road of forgiveness is choosing a journey toward greater freedom. Resentment, anger, and clinging to past hurts not only keep open wounds that long for healing but bring us down paths that are eventually self-destructive. Harboring grudges and withholding forgiveness not only shut down relationships with others, but with God and myself as well. To choose to forgive another person, regardless of how grave the wrong, is a choice to be released from bondage to past wounds and scars and to pursue the gift of life and love again. Who among us has not wrong or sinned against another? We certainly would want God to understand, forgive, and show mercy upon us. It is hypocritical of us to not extend that same grace to our neighbor.



PLEASE NOTE!

Work inside church to refinish the wood floors and upgrade the carpet areas has begun. No Wednesday mass on 9/16 and possibly 9/23, mass on Sunday the 9/13 and possibly 9/20 will be held outdoors.

FAITH FORMATION REGISTRATION

Faith Formation Registration forms will be mailed to Sacred Heart families this week. Registration forms are due on September 14 for 9th & 10th graders and September 22 for 1st - 8th graders. More information will follow about online classes.

Fall Chicken Dinner & Raffle Save the date! Sunday, September 20, 2020!

If you can volunteer to serve and run food out as the orders come please contact the church office. Also, if you can donate an Apple crisp please contact Sue Roth at 651-238-1797, the recipe is on our website for downloading.

Thank you!



Father God, Your Word says the prayer of faith shall heal the sick. We come to You today in Faith asking that you heal us from every sickness, disease, and illness. We receive our healing by faith. In Jesus name AMEN.

Continued prayers for:

Sue Roth, Janet Yurick, Gerald Mollberg, Jim Thorn, Judy Strandmark, Shirley Kirchberg Traci Bartz, Joseph Schwaab, Grace Schwaab, David Gamache, George Stenger Jr.

September 19 & 20 Celebrants

Fr. Shane	St. Gregory	5:00 p.m.
Fr. Shane	Sacred Heart	9:00 a.m.

September 26 & 27 Celebrants

Fr. Fitzgerald	St. Gregory	5:00 p.m.
Fr. Fitzgerald	Sacred Heart	9:00 a.m.

FOOD SHELF DONATIONS

Get more value for your donations by giving cash! Please note "Food Shelf" on your envelope. If you do donate food, please no produce that can spoil. Thank you.

COME TO ME AND REST. Give your mind a break from its habitual judging. You from judgements about this situation, that situation, this person, that person, yourself, even the weather—as if judging were your main function in life. But I created you first and foremost to know Me and to live in rich communication with Me. When you become preoccupied with passing judgement, you usurp My role.

Relate to Me as creature to Creator, sheep to Shepherd, subject to King, clay to Potter. Allow Me to have My way in your life. Rather than evaluating My ways with you, accept them thankfully. The intimacy I offer you is not an invitation to act as if you were My equal. Worship Me as *King of kings* while walking hand in hand with Me down the path of Life.

Matthew 7:1; John 17:3; Romans 9:20; 1 Timothy 6:15