

Ordinary 7C - 2022

"He just ran over three motorcycles on his way out of the parking lot."

Late one summer evening a weary truck driver pulled his rig into an all-night service station to get some food. The waitress had just served him when three tough looking, leather jacketed motorcyclists - of the Hell's Angels type - decided to give him a hard time. Not only did they verbally abuse him, one grabbed the hamburger off his plate, another took a handful of his chips, and the third picked up his coffee and began to drink it. How would you respond? Well, this trucker did not respond as one might expect. Instead, he calmly rose, picked up his bill and walked to the front of the restaurant, paid his bill and went out the door. The waitress followed him to put the money in the cash register and stood watching out the door as the big truck drove away into the night. When she returned, one of the bikers said to her, "Well, he's not much of a man, is he?" She replied, "I don't know about that, but he sure ain't much of a truck driver. He just ran over three motorcycles on his way out of the parking lot."

We laugh at that because that is what we'd like to do to those who make life difficult for us. When someone does something to us, our first instinct is to get back at them! Our first instinct is to make them pay and to hurt as much as they hurt us. But that is not what Jesus would have us do. In Luke 6, Jesus gives us a different response to have. What would Jesus have us do to our enemies? He tells us we are to LOVE THEM. (Rev. [David Elvery](https://frtonyshomilies.com/)). (<https://frtonyshomilies.com/>)

"Forgive Your Enemies"

The preacher's Sunday sermon was, "Forgive Your Enemies." He asked, "How many have forgiven their enemies?" About half held up their hands. He then repeated the question. This time about eighty percent held up their hands. He then repeated his question a third time. The entire congregation held up their hands except one elderly lady. "Mrs. Jones," the preacher asked, "aren't you willing to forgive your enemies?" **"I don't have any"** she replied. "That is very unusual", the preacher said. "How old are you?" "Ninety-three."

"Mrs. Jones, please come to the front and tell the congregation how a person cannot have an enemy in the world." The little sweetheart of a lady tottered down the aisle and said: **"It's easy; I just outlived all those rascals!"**

"Fratres Pontifices," the bridge-building brothers.

In A.D. 1191, Pope Clement III approved a new guild. Its members included nobles, clergy, and artisans. The work of the guild consisted of clearing dangerous roads for pilgrims and building bridges over rivers and chasms. Members of the guild wore clothing that carried a picture of two things: a cross and a bridge. The guild was called "*Fratres Pontifices*," the bridge-building brothers. — And that is who we who follow Jesus are called to be. An Episcopal priest, Dr. Joseph Fort Newton, once commented: "People are lonely because they build walls instead of bridges." [Edward Chinn, *Wonder of Words* (Lima, Ohio: C.S.S. Publishing Co., Inc., 1987), p. 22.] (<https://frtonyshomilies.com/>)

Arab girl with Jewish kidney:

On February 4 in the year 2007, the ABC re-broadcast a program documenting the moving story of Marsha Gladstone, a Jewish woman from Scotland. When a bus in Tel Aviv was shattered in a suicide bombing, Marsha's 19-year-old son Yoni Jesner was critically injured. Yoni never regained consciousness, and before he died, the family agreed to make some of his organs available for transplant. The decision to donate helped them to find some meaning in this senseless tragedy. The subsequent revelation that one of Yoni's kidneys had saved the life of Yasmin Rumeilah, a seven-year-old Palestinian girl, came as quite a shock to the family. It had simply never occurred to this Jewish family that a child of the "enemy" would become the beneficiary of Yoni's gift. — A year after Yoni's death and at considerable personal cost, Marsha visited Yasmin and her family in their home in the West Bank. The Jewish mother who had lost her son embraced the Palestinian mother whose child lives with gratitude in her heart for the young Jewish man who gave her another chance at life and whom she now refers to as her "brother". There was an extraordinary moment of womb-compassion in the embrace of these two women, one Jewish and the other Muslim. The hatred and misunderstanding of the generations seemed to dissolve in their encounter. (<https://frtonyshomilies.com/>).

About "dreaming the impossible dream"?

That phrase comes from the Joe Darion song in 1965, immortalized by the 1965 stage play about "Don Quixote" and by the 1966 recording by Frank Sinatra. It speaks of an "unbeatable foe," and suffering "unbearable sorrow," as well as righting the "unrightable wrong." The advice that Jesus gives in today's Gospel is a lot like that. Nevertheless, the only option he offers is that of loving everyone, including our enemies and those who hurt us.

Jesus was aware that only love can stop the cycle of hatred. He knew that only if the "dream" became a reality it would come to fruition.