

Twenty Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time
September 17, 2017

COMPASSION AND FORGIVENESS

Mary

The Reading from Sirach helps us understand what anger and hate can do to us if we hold onto it. We are a people who want forgiveness but we must pardon others if we want to be pardoned. We need to set aside our hostility or hatred and give them to our Lord Jesus and never take them back. Overlook faults of others and it will be a great reward in heaven. God's Covenant is so real to all of us and will set us free.

The Lord is kind and merciful; slow to anger and rich in compassion. God's love for us is even difficult to put into words. My husband has been a great example of being slow to anger and very compassionate. Being left handed is a different situation and when he tells me to do something and my first instinct is to go the wrong way he just smiles and says try going the other way. It is the smile that is endearing to me. Once while in Arizona, I was in the confessional and confessed that when my husband told me how to cook, I told him not to tell me what to do. The priest told me that it was arrogant to treat someone that way when they were trying to help me. I was flabbergasted because at that time I had been cooking for over 50 years. Now I try to remember Frank is just trying to make my job easier doing it his way. Now, instead of saying "don't tell me what to do", I try to ask him, "do I have to do it his way"? I don't want to be arrogant and I want to be kind. Perhaps God is smiling at the fact that we are learning the important things in life.

In Romans it says, for if we live for the Lord, we are the Lord's. He gave His life for each of us. This makes me think of how my prayers have developed over the years. What I say today gives me joy probably more than I deserve but it makes Mass more enjoyable. Praying before Mass now is a prayer of thankfulness for all that God has given me. It is a prayer of praise, honor and glory to God for the love in my life.

Matthew's Gospel explains the reason forgiveness is essential for our Christian growth. Each of us should forgive others from our heart. Being parents gives us plenty of chances to forgive. It's like a lesson that keeps on giving. When children advance in age sometimes the challenges to be forgiving get greater. It is those times that take me to prayer to find my own forgiveness for the situation. That is also a gift for which we can be thankful. When I realize all of the Love in my life it is surely why God's grace seems so obvious. Reverence to God, our Father; Jesus, our savior and the Holy Spirit, our companion day after day gives us the confidence we need to see how many graces and blessings we have in life.

Frank

The reading from Sirach says Wrath and Anger are hateful things. As we travel through life we all experience others who show hate. The reading from Sirach tells you to “forgive your neighbors injustice”. Road rage is a good example of hate. Some people are full of frustration and anger. When someone shows their anger to you, don’t take it personally. Just smile, wave and move on. It will make you a happier person and also a forgiving person.

The second reading from Romans gave me a new insight of the Lord. The reading says “for this is why Christ died and came to life that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living”. I never thought of it that way. I was aware that Christ was Lord of the living and never thought of him being Lord of the dead.

In the Gospel of Matthew, Peter is talking to Jesus and asked how many times that he should forgive. Jesus told him not just seven but seventy times seven. There have been times when it was hard for me to forgive someone. Once that I did forgive that person it was like the Lord talking to me and it was like a cleansing for me.

Frank & Mary Clark