

SEPTEMBER 11, 2011: Twenty-Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time



Peter approached Jesus and asked Him, "Lord, if my brother sins against me, how often must I forgive? As many as seven times?" Jesus answered, "I say to you, not seven times but seventy-seven times."
Mt 18:21-22

LITURGY

MASS INTENTIONS & READINGS

Sunday, September 11 (Sir 27:30-28:9/Rom 14:7-9/Mt 18:21-35)

8:00 am- John Jalufka
10:30 am- For our Parish Family

Monday, Sept. 12, *The Most Holy Name of the Blessed Virgin Mary* (1 Tm 2:1-8/Lk 7:1-10)

7:00 am- Frank & Bessie Pesek
10:00 am- Living & deceased members of John Morisak Family (H'ville Rehab)

Tuesday, Sept. 13, *St. John Chrysostom, bishop & doctor of the Church* (1 Tm 3:1-13/Lk 7:11-17)

7:00 am- John, Sr. & Victor Trojcak; Julius & Annie Horky

Wednesday, September 14, *Exaltation of the Holy Cross* (Nm 21:4b-9/Phil 2:6-11/Jn 3:13-17)

7:00 am- Otto Lee & Ethlyne Zappe
8:05 am- I. B. Krejci

Thursday, September 15, *Our Lady of Sorrows* (1 Tm 4:12-16/Jn 19:25-27)

7:00 am- Albert Janecek
10:00 am- Margaret Etzler (Stevens)

Friday, September 16, *St. Cornelius, pope & martyr; St. Cyprian, bishop & martyr* (1 Tm 6:2c-12/Lk 8:1-3)

7:00 am- Janet & John Brier
8:05 am- Lillie Demny

Saturday, September 17, *St. Robert Bellarmine, bishop & doctor of the Church* (1 Tm 6:13-16/Lk 8:4-15)

5:30 pm- Herbert, Hedy, Wilbert & Robert Greer; H. G. Cobb

Sunday, Sept. 18 (Is 55:6-9/Phil 1:20c-24, 27a/Mt 20:1-16a)

8:00 am- Louis R. Kallus
10:30 am- For our Parish Family

Bulletin Sponsor: Catholic Life Insurance Branch 22.

Radio Broadcast Sponsor: K.J.T. Society No. 5.

Vigil Light: In memory of Alice Miller.

Our Gift to God: Envelopes-\$5,560; Building Repair Fund-\$1,065; Catholic Education-\$585; Loose-\$1,505; Children-\$51.

Promise of Marriage:

Rhonda Smirak & Aaron Bludau – September 17

Anniversaries:

Marvin & Lillian Rabel	53 years	Sept. 14
Boyce & Anita Rother	59 years	Sept. 15

Baptisms in August: Sarah Elizabeth, daughter of Brian & Tiffany Elmore Janak; Braedon Charles, son of Charles & Leah Steinocher Joyce; Nathaniel Alejandro, son of Alejandro Hernandez & Veronica Guerra; and Mark Anthony, son of Mark & Deseray Glasenapp Parker.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 11

-Holy Cross Festival, Yorktown Community Hall.
-BBQ Calf Group Supper, 5:30 p.m., KC Hall Pavilion.

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 12

-Rosary & evening prayer, 5:30 p.m., Church.
-KJZT meeting, 6:30 p.m., Mary's House.

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 13

-Quilting Circle, 9:00 a.m., KC Hall of Fame Room.
-Christian Mothers meeting, 7:00 p.m., Family Center.

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 14

-CCD: K-12th Grade, 6:00-7:15 p.m.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 18

-Firefall, 5:00-6:00 p.m., Church. Parishioners are invited to join the youth of our parish in Eucharistic Adoration.

Among our sick: Edna Key, Frank Fishar, Helen M. Appelt, Faith Del Castillo, Michael Gerdes, Renae Ross, Hubert & Mary Grahmann, Odessa, Doug & Richard Blumberg, Danielle Grady, Rose Thumann, Dr. Michael Moore, Bill Gohlke, Sterlin Ritchie, Brenda Grahmann, Ed Aulick, Ricky Skelton, Larry Appelt, Victor Pavliska, Anita Bohuslav, Anita Kallus, Daniel Wick, Josephine Janak, Paul Najvar, Betty Hernandez, Gene Drozd, Irene Bordovsky, Steven DeLaRosa, Milissa Zamora, Rhonda Janak, Larry Korenek, Alex Drozd, Red Kahanek, Theresa Steffek, Donna Haas Belt, Willard Hagendorf, Bobby Pavliska, Betty Hemmi, nursing home residents & homebound.

Retreat forms for the Women's (Sept. 22-25) and Men's (Oct. 6-9) ACTS Retreat are available in the Church foyer. Please pick up a form and mail it to the address on the application as soon as possible. *Thank you!*

The Gabriel Project is looking for volunteers. If you are interested please call Renae Harper, 361-208-4047. An informational meeting will be held in the Family Center on Monday, October 3rd at 6:30 p.m.

Sacred Heart Catholic School invites the entire community to a prayer service and flag raising ceremony on Monday, Sept. 12 at 8:15 a.m. commemorating the 10th anniversary of the Sept. 11, 2001 terrorist attack on the U.S. A special invitation goes to the members of the American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Vietnam Veterans of America, Hallettsville Volunteer Fire Department, Emergency Medical Services, Lavaca County Sheriff's Department, Lavaca County Officials, City of Hallettsville Officials, and all Ladies' Auxiliaries.

Welcome to the Parish: Tom & Gayle Bludau, children Sarah, Hannah & Luke; LaVonne Needham, husband Boyce; Randy & Courtney Perez; and, Brian & Amber Nieto, children Kaitlyn, Emma & Felix.

Christian Initiation for Adults: Are you interested in joining the Catholic Church? Please call Fr. Tommy to sign up for RCIA classes to receive instruction on the Catholic faith.

A special thank you goes to the Hallettsville Fire Department for the quick response and efficient handling of the fire along the Lavaca River behind the KC Hall on Sunday. Had they not arrived as soon as they did, the situation with the RV Park and the KC Hall could have been disastrous. Thank you also to the Sweet Home, Moulton and Shiner Fire Departments for their assistance and the KC members and others who helped man nearby water hoses. Thank you also to the police and EMS for their assistance.

We are blessed with a great Volunteer Fire Department and with the spirit of volunteerism in our community and surrounding communities.

Thank you to everyone for helping make the Sacred Heart Picnic a success Sunday. This picnic will be remembered for a long time.

**Religious Education (CCD) ~ Office 798-3124
Angela McConnell, Coordinator**

Sept. 18: Catechetical Sunday – all Masses.

Sept. 24: Conference for Catechesis & Ministry, Holy Family Parish, Victoria.

Confirmation News: Jr. Sponsor forms are *way* past due! Confirmation mini-retreat on October 2 for Junior candidates & their sponsors.

Save the Date: Sophomore confirmation cemetery clean up day, October 15, 9:00 – 11:30 a.m.

**Sacred Heart Catholic School News
Office 798-4251**

Sept. 12: School Advisory Council meeting, 6:00 p.m., Teacher's Workroom.

Sept. 14: Booster Club mtg, 7:30 p.m., KC Hall of Fame Room.

Sept. 19: Student Council Blood Drive, 11 a.m. – 6 p.m.

Fr. Tommy's Adult Religious Formation Classes begin

Oct. 4: During the Fall semester, we will be utilizing a Bible-study program called "A Biblical Walk Through the Mass" to prepare ourselves for the upcoming implementation of the 3rd edition of the Roman Missal in English.

Classes begin on Tuesday, October 4 in the Family Center and are from 7pm to 8:30pm. This is an exciting time for us in the Church in America, a time to recapture the true meaning of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass which is at the heart of who we are as Catholics. A companion textbook and workbook are highly recommended for this class in order to receive the most from the course. The textbook/workbook together will cost \$20. Please call Fr. Tommy Chen to sign up for this course and to place an order for the class material. **(Deadline to place orders for the class material is September 15.)**

Novena for rain to be held in church, Monday, Sept. 12 through Tuesday, Sept. 20, everyday at 7:00 p.m., except on Friday at 5:30 p.m. and Saturday after evening Mass.

Sacrament of Confirmation for Adults: Are you an adult at least 18 years or older who regularly practices your Catholic faith, but still needing to receive the sacrament of Confirmation? Please call Fr. Tommy to sign up for Confirmation preparation classes for Adults. The bishop will be coming to our parish on May 20, 2012 to administer the sacrament of Confirmation to all those who are prepared.

PRAYER FOR RAIN – Almighty God, we are in need of rain. We realize now, looking up into the clear, blue sky, what a marvel even the least drop of rain really is. To think that so much water can fall out of the sky, which now is empty and clear! We place our trust in You. We are sure that You know our needs. But You want us to ask You anyway, to show You that we know we are dependent on You. Look on our dry hills and fields, dear God, and bless them with the living blessing of soft rain. Then the land will rejoice, and the rivers will sing Your praises, and the hearts of men will be made glad. Amen.

**The Youth ConneXion
Greg & Kris Hermes: 798-0655**

Sept 18th: FIREFALL & youth gathering (8th-12th Gr.)

Oct 1st: Jr. High "BACK TO SCHOOL BASH" details coming soon.

24th Sunday in Ordinary Time – This will be a weekend of memorials. Wreaths will be laid; there will be moments of silence. The names of the dead will be proclaimed and stories of their lives will be told. Commentators will voice their opinions and newscasts will replay the sound and video from that awful Tuesday morning ten years ago when four planes crashed out of a bright, sunny sky.

Ten years ago, on the Sunday after the attack, we heard the story of the prodigal son. This year, the cycle of Lectionary readings brings us the parable from Matthew of the unforgiving servant. As we hear this parable we feel a certain sense of justice as the servant, a despicable character without compassion, is thrown into jail by the master who had once forgiven his huge debt. While we might momentarily rejoice in the just outcome of this parable, we are immediately skewered by the words of Jesus, who says to us, "So will my heavenly Father do to you, unless each of you forgives your brother from your heart."

We hadn't bargained on this outcome to the parable. We are caught in the same trap as the ungrateful servant. And where does that leave us on a day such as this, when we remember those whose lives have been lost and believe the perpetrators to be as despicable as the servant in the Gospel? Jesus does not make life easy for us. As our Savior, He redeems us not only from the sin we inflict on others, but also from the sin we inflict on ourselves. Learning to forgive even the greatest sinners is the call of every Christian.

The Word of God This Week

Set time aside each day this week with other members of your household, with other members of your parish or alone to listen to and reflect on the living Word of God. Use these passages from the Lectionary that are assigned for Liturgy this week. Reflect on how the Lord is inviting you to a deeper union with him.

TODAY

Sirach 27:30—28:9
Romans 14:7—9
Matthew 18:21—35

MONDAY

Luke 7:1—10
"... not even in Israel have I found such faith."

TUESDAY

Luke 7:11—17
"Young man, I say to you, rise!"

WEDNESDAY

John 3:13—17
"... whoever believes in him may have eternal life."

THURSDAY*

John 19:25—27
"Here is your mother."

FRIDAY**

Luke 8:1—3
"... he went on . . . proclaiming and bringing the good news . . ."

SATURDAY

Luke 8:4—15
"Let anyone with ears to hear listen!"

*Alternate readings exist for this day.

**Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross

God Demands Forgiveness

Matthew is tough! When Luke reports Jesus' words about how often we must forgive, he tells us seven times per day (17:4). But when Jesus answers Peter in today's Gospel from Matthew, the amount has risen to "seventy-seven times." The Greek phrase can also be translated, "seventy times seven times." But whether it is 77 times or 490 times, the meaning is clear: we must always forgive.

Today's parable of the unforgiving servant shows us why. The amount that the servant owed to his master (ten thousand talents) was an astronomical amount, about one billion dollars. The amount that a fellow servant owed to him (one hundred denarii) was a few months' wages. By presenting this vast difference in amounts, the parable insists that if we appreciate the mercy that

has been shown to us by God, our only option is to forgive others. Because, no matter how much forgiveness we are asked to extend to another, God has shown us more.

Earlier in this Gospel, Matthew rephrases a petition of the Lord's Prayer to emphasize the same point: "For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you; but if you do not forgive others, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses" (6:14–15).

There is no doubt that when people have hurt or betrayed us, forgiveness is difficult. It takes strength, courage, and often considerable time for us to let the offense go. That is what makes today's Gospel so challenging. God does not suggest or invite forgiveness but demands that we forgive our brothers or sisters from our heart.



The Faith of the Church

In reflecting on the Lord's Prayer, we realize that God's mercy cannot penetrate our hearts as long as we have not forgiven those who have trespassed against us. We cannot divide love. We cannot love the God we cannot see, if we do not love the brother or sister who we do see (Cf. *Catechism of the Catholic Church* 2840).



Questions of the Week

The tragedy of today's parable is that the unforgiving servant learned nothing from the extravagant gesture of the king who forgave his debt. This suggests that the foundation of our ability to forgive others is gratitude for God's forgiveness to us.

Adults

Have I ever been grateful for the willingness of someone to forgive me? How might I use that graciousness to enable my forgiveness of others?

Children

Has anyone ever forgiven me when I did something wrong? Can I be generous enough to also forgive someone else?

Responding to God's Word . . .

Even though God demands that we forgive, he does not insist on reconciliation. One person is able to forgive, but it takes two willing people for a broken relationship to be healed. Reconciliation often demands a change in two hearts so that a new relationship can emerge.

This is why even when one person is willing to forgive, reconciliation may never happen. If one person remains immature or selfish, if one person will not turn from the abuse of alcohol or drugs, if one person remains manipulative or violent, a healthy new relationship cannot be established.

The demand to forgive does not imply that we are responsible to fix or make every relationship whole. Two people are necessary for that. Forgiveness shows our willingness to explore the possibility of reconciliation. It is the openness to reconnect *if* we find that a new and viable relationship is possible.

Reconciliation, then, is always a grace—a gift which only God can give. All we can do is forgive, to be open to the change that God may work between us and the one who has hurt us. It is this forgiveness that is demanded of us and upon which our forgiveness from God depends.

SUGGESTIONS

Use one of these suggestions or one of your own to respond to God's Word this week.

In the home. Identify someone who has hurt you. Look for an opportunity to discuss the wrong and open the way for reconciliation.

In the workplace or in school. Find someone to whom you have been dismissive or mean. Find an opportunity to apologize.

In the community. Notice if there are groups in your neighborhood or church who speak against each other. Reflect upon a way to bring them together.



Meditation Moment

Whenever we forgive from the heart, we build a bridge over which we must pass on our way from earth to heaven. For each of us is a sinner. And the only way we can pass from earth to heaven is over the bridge of God's forgiveness. "If you forgive others . . .," Jesus said, "your Father in heaven will also forgive you" (Matthew 6:14). In other words, the surest insurance policy against the loss of heaven is to forgive others from the heart.

For reflection . . .

Jesus' words invite me to recall someone who has hurt me and to consciously forgive that person now.

TO ERR IS HUMAN, TO FORGIVE DIVINE.
ALEXANDER POPE

FROM *VISION* BY MARK LINK, SJ

A Prayer for Forgiveness

God of Mercy,
you know who has hurt me.
You can see how my heart tightens
whenever I hear my offender's name.
You watch as I lick my wounds believing
that feeding my anger will make me
whole. Come to me Lord. Open my
heart! Clear my mind to understand
that resentment only tortures my soul.
Allow me to let go and forgive,
so that my heart might open
again and let love in.
Amen.

Carry this thought in your heart as a guide for your faith journey this week.

Forgive your neighbor the wrong he has done, and then your sins will be pardoned when you pray. Does anyone harbor anger against another, and expect healing from the Lord?

Sirach 28:2-3

Profile in Faith

Ben Sira

Ben Sira was a devout Jew who wrote the Book of Sirach about 200 years before Christ's birth. His writing is considered inspired Scripture by Catholics. His instruction includes many beliefs that are also found in the teaching of Jesus, such as the connection between our forgiving others and God forgiving us.

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† Most Reverend Kevin J. Farrell, DD, Bishop of Dallas
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