

EXPLORING THE SUNDAY GOSPEL AT HOME

MENDER

EXPLORING NEXT SUNDAY'S THEME

Reflecting on the Gospel

Forgiveness (Matthew 18: 21-35)

In chapter 18 Matthew presents a block of teaching concerned with the relationship among Christians, or life in the church, and is sometimes described as a community rule. After dealing with the need to recall sinners to repentance and seeking the lost, Matthew turns attention to the issue of forgiveness. Christians are people who have been forgiven much by God and should, therefore, go on showing forgiveness to others. The point is made in the parable of the slave who was forgiven a large debt but who refused himself to forgive a small debt. To forgive is to mend and to restore relationships.

Our image to stimulate reflection on this passage is *mender*.

Extracts from the Gospel passage (Matthew 18: 21-22)

Peter came and said to Jesus,
'Lord, if another member of the church sins against me,
how often should I forgive?
As many as seven times?'
Jesus said to him,
'Not seven times,
but, I tell you, seventy-seven times.'

Gospel prayer

Lord Jesus Christ,
you call your followers
to be forgiving people.
Help us to forgive others
that we may live up to our calling;
for you are our God.
Amen.

ENGAGING WITH THE THEME AT HOME

Reflecting and meditating

Reflect on Matthew's parable of the unforgiving slave in Matthew 18: 21-35:

- what details in the passage catch your attention?
- what big ideas does the passage spark in your mind?
- what most touches your heart in the passage?
- what most stretches your mind and makes you think in the passage?

Thinking and talking

- what do you make of the King's intention to put his slave up for sale?
- how do you understand the King's change of heart?
- what do you make of the forgiven slave's treatment of his fellow slave?
- how do you feel about the King's closing actions?
- what does this narrative say for us today?

Using your Bible

In the fourth block of Matthew's teaching the parable of the unforgiving slave only appears in Matthew's Gospel, although the linking material about the number of times forgiveness should be given is shared by Luke. Compare also Luke's famous parable about forgiveness:

- Luke 17: 3-4
- Luke 15: 11-32

Explore related ideas of forgiveness in the Old Testament:

- Genesis 50: 15-21
- Psalm 103: 1-13

Exploring online

- explore Jesus' teaching about forgiveness
- explore images of menders at work across different trades and professions
- explore theologies of forgiveness

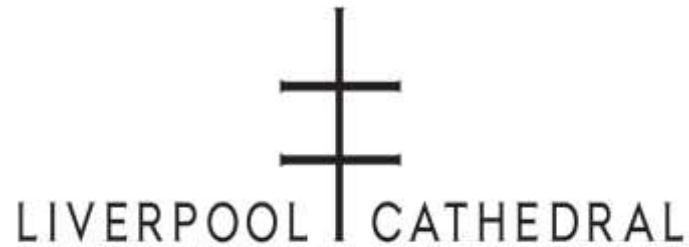
Drawing on experience

- reflect on occasions when you have forgiven others
- reflect on occasions when you have sought forgiveness
- reflect on occasions when you have needed the mender to repair things for you

PROPER 19 (YEAR A) SUNDAY 13 SEPTEMBER 2020

Creating and making

- make a collage drawing together images of different menders: forgiveness mends and restores relationships
- make a poster re-telling the parable of the unforgiving slave
- collect stories about remarkable acts of forgiveness
- create a reflection, poem, or prayer on the theme of the mender or forgiveness



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Each week we are inviting people in their homes to look forward to those Sunday services that follow the Revised Common Lectionary Gospel readings. We employ the SIFT approach (Sensing, Intuition, Feeling, and Thinking) to encourage reflection on the Sunday Gospel. We are suggesting a variety of ways in which people of all ages, and households working together, may engage with the Gospel reading and celebrate that engagement with shared activities.

Our invitation then is for you to share your reflections, prayers and photos of your creative work with the Cathedral by emailing them to Nelson.Pike@liverpoolcathedral.org.uk

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