

11.14.2020

FORGIVENESS

And a Job Well Done

For most men, no matter the task, work is an essential part of life, defining who they are and granting them the opportunity to undertake and complete a task to the best of their abilities.

Men farm the land and fish the seas, build houses and towers, craft furniture by hand and make cars on assembly lines. They push brooms, drive trucks, stock shelves. They are plumbers, electricians, and carpenters, police, soldiers and sailors, doctors and lawyers, teachers and bank managers, cab drivers, insurance salesmen and priests of God.



Far and away
the best prize
that life has
to offer is
the chance
to work hard
at work
worth doing.

- THEODORE ROOSEVELT
Theodore Roosevelt
(1858-1919)

In 1903 at a Labor Day Parade, President Teddy Roosevelt famously said: "Far and away the best prize that life has to offer is the chance to work hard at work worth doing."

Teddy's words continue to resonate loudly in the present time. But how does one find what is the correct work? After all, work, if pursued correctly, can be one of the most rewarding and fulfilling activities a man can undertake. How does God come into the picture with regards to finding the appropriate vocation?

**I Forgive
You.**

-GOD

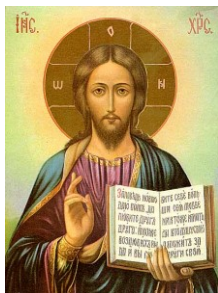
In 1 John 1:9 we are given a clue: "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Another clue can be found in John 20:23: "Any to whom you give forgiveness, will be made free from their sins; and any from whom you keep back forgiveness, will still be in their sins."

So how does this apply to work? How do we find the correct work, a work worth doing? What is God's work in our lives...that is, what work of God are we supposed to do? How can we begin to obtain the "Best Prize"?

God has created a plan for each one of us that exceeds our wildest expectations because it aligns with what we are meant to be doing, not what we expect we should be doing.

What happens to our lives when we make a shift in our attitude and admit that Jesus is our Savior and invite Him into our heart of hearts? Let us listen attentively to the wisdom found in Holy Scripture, our Catechism and in Modern Comment.

*Forgiveness does
not change the
past, but it does
enlarge the
future.*



Ephesians 4:31-32 – Forgive Firstly

All bitterness, fury, anger, shouting, reviling must be removed from you, along with all malice. And be kind to one another, compassionate, forgiving one another as God has forgiven you in Christ.

Matthew 18:15-16 – How to Forgive

If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, so that every fact may be established on the testimony of two or three witnesses.

Luke 17:3-4 – Forgive Always

Be on your guard! If your brother sins, rebuke him; and if he repents, forgive him. And if he wrongs you seven times in one day and returns to you seven times saying, 'I am sorry,' you should forgive him.

Psalms 90:17 Hope for your work

Let the favor of the Lord our God be upon us;
And confirm for us the work of our hands;
Yes, confirm the work of our hands.

The Word of the Lord

“Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us.” The Our Father

Catechism

CCC 2840 - Forgive Others to Make Room for the Holy Spirit

Now - and this is daunting - this outpouring of mercy cannot penetrate our hearts as long as we have not forgiven those who have trespassed against us. Love, like the Body of Christ, is indivisible; we cannot love the God we cannot see if we do not love the brother we do see. In refusing to forgive our brothers, our hearts are closed and their hardness makes them impervious to the Father’s merciful love; but in confessing our sins, our hearts are opened to his grace.



Modern Comment

FORGIVENESS - And a Job Well Done

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.

To forgive is to set a prisoner FREE AND discover that the prisoner was you.

- LEWIS B. SMEDLEY

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 be not want to do the same for others?

Lord, thank you for Forgiving me so that I might Forgive others. This is the work you have given me. Amen. And AMEN.

**Remember,
You Don'T
Forgive
Someone
For His Or
Her Sake
- You Forgive
Them For
Your Sake.**

Remove the pain by forgiving.

Allow a place for Jesus to reside in your heart.

Put your Faith into Actions.

May God Bless You With a Gift of Forgiveness.

St. Hilary Men's Group

FORGIVENESS EXAMPLES:

- 1. Hospital Experience of a Lifetime Volunteer.
- 2. Midnight Mass

Questions for Discussion:

- 1. What part of the Forgiveness Concept spoke most clearly to you?

- 2. Has there been a time in your life that you found it difficult if not unable to forgive someone? How did that situation turn out? Explain.

A person's vocation or work CANNOT be successful or fulfilling without forgiveness as without forgiveness the burden of holding a grudge or planning retaliation compromises the work ... and is NOT Gods plan!



Men's Group Calendar
A Man who never quits is Never Defeated.

11/20/2020	Leadership Meeting	9:30 AM Meet Rooms 1 & 2
12/12/2020	Men's Group	7 AM Mass
12/18/2020	Leadership Meeting	9:30 AM Meet Rooms 1 & 2
1/9/2021	Men's Group	7 AM Mass
1/22/2021	Leadership Meeting	9:30 AM Meet Rooms 1 & 2
2/13/2021	Men's Group	7 AM Mass

A Prayer of Forgiveness

Merciful God, your living word tells us that you not only forgive our offenses, you forget them. I have a hard time with both. Forgetting past hurts and those who have hurt me is almost impossible. I have never been, nor ever want to be, a person without a memory.

But I do want to be able, to forgive those who have hurt me, wronged me, disappointed me, failed me, and even damaged me. I want to forgive them, because I too have hurt many in the course of my life – and I want to be forgiven even as I forgive.

Accepting forgiveness and forgiving others go hand in hand.

My Lord, I also know that forgiveness is a choice, a decision. It is not an emotion. I may not feel forgiving at all, yet in and through this prayer, I choose to especially forgive the person(s) who hurt my heart the most.

I may have to pray this over and over, because the old attitudes and grudges do not go away easily.

ACTION PLAN

This month I will do my best to listen for God's will in my life by:

- Creating a daily prayer practice.
- Seeking God in prayer and being quiet in His presence.
- Paying more attention to God's Blessings in my life.
- Asking Jesus for help in becoming a better servant.
- Practice Forgiving others.

Dear Jesus, let me become a more Forgiving Man – toward others and my self—so that I may experience healing, peace, and renewal, and be a Blessing to others. Amen.

BEFORE THANKSGIVING DAY SPECIAL ASSIGNMENT

Nine-Step Forgiveness Exercise

1. Make a list of all the people you feel have wronged you in some way; write down what each one did and why it's not OK.
2. Acknowledge that those things did happen, and that they did hurt you.
3. State out loud that you forgive this person(s) for the wrong that have committed.
4. Recognize that your distress is coming not from what happened, but from the thoughts that you have about what happened. The event is in the past. Your thoughts are within your control.
5. When you feel yourself getting upset over what happened, practice stress reduction techniques to calm your body's fight or flight response. Losing oneself in Prayer is the best way to do this.
6. Another thing you can try when you start getting upset about a past experience is to ask yourself, "What am I thankful for?" Ask this repeatedly until you feel better.
7. Put your energy into looking for ways to moving on, instead of wasting your energy by continuously reliving the negative experiences in your mind.
8. Know that the best revenge is a life well lived. Forgiveness is about taking back your power.
9. Amend your grievance story to include how you moved on.

Broken
things can become
blessed things
if you let God
do the mending.



Lord, God and Savior, by your love you draw me to yourself. Forgive me – the sinner that I am, and fill me with every good thing, not withholding even the gift of your most beloved son. Come dwell in my heart.

Send forth your Holy Spirit to guide me in your path. Make me worthy of your love, and teach me how to forgive as you forgave.

Thank you for your tender mercies. I ask you to bless my family, friends and those who I meet in my comings and goings.

Where there is joy, give them continued joy. Where there is pain or sorrow, give them your peace and mercy. Where there is self-doubt, release in them a renewed confidence. Fill their every need with your Holy Grace.

You are indeed my Lord, God and Savior. Amen

**The Weak can never forgive.
Forgiveness is the attribute of
the Strong!**
Mahatma Gandhi

Do not worry at all about negative thoughts, and do not try to control them. All you have to do is begin to think good thoughts each day. Plant as many good thoughts as you can in each day. As you begin to think good thoughts you will attract more and more good thoughts, and eventually the good thoughts will wipe out the negative thoughts altogether.

Rhonda Byrne



The founder of the Society of Jesus, St. Ignace of Loyola, once walked a hundred miles during the winter to nurse a man who had fallen ill — a man who, only a few weeks earlier, had stolen Ignace's meager savings.



REMINDER: Diocese Social Distancing, food distribution and mask regulations will be followed in Men's Group Meetings until further notice. Please use the hand sanitizers placed at Room entrances when coming in. If you have a fever or otherwise not feeling well, please stay at home.