

Year A

## Twenty-Fourth Sunday of the Year

### Be forgiving

#### INTRODUCTION

Jesus taught us that if we wanted God to forgive us, then we must first learn to forgive each other. In today's Gospel, he tells a parable about a forgiving King and his unforgiving servant.

#### SIGN OF THE CROSS

#### LIGHT THE CANDLES

Light the candles and sing the Candle Song together.

#### SORRY

When we forgive someone, or they forgive us, we lose our feelings of anger and hurt; we no longer want to pay them back; we become friends again! Jesus showed us how to forgive others and how he would forgive us. (The children should join in the response to the prayer.)

If I have hurt anyone  
by what I have said or done...

*Jesus, I am sorry.*

If I have ignored someone  
or made them feel unloved...

*Jesus, I am sorry.*

If I have been unforgiving  
and full of anger...

*Jesus, I am sorry.*

#### GLORIA

#### GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

To welcome today's Gospel sing Acclamation 3.

#### GOSPEL (MATTHEW 18:23-35)

One day Jesus told this story: "There was once a king who had many servants. One servant owed the king a great deal of money, but he had nothing to pay him with. 'I will sell you and your family as slaves, and use the money to pay for your debts,' said the King.

"The servant fell to his knees and begged for another chance, 'Somehow I will repay everything I owe,' he pleaded. The King was a kind and generous man and, taking pity on the servant, cancelled his debts and let him go.

"Later that day, the servant met another man who owed him a small amount of money. When he could not pay what he owed, the servant had him thrown into jail.

"When the news reached the king, he sent for the unforgiving servant. 'Could you not forgive someone just as I forgave you?' he asked. Then he had the servant thrown into prison until he could pay back all that he owed the king."

Jesus said, "Just as my father forgives you, so you must be ready to forgive others with all your heart."

#### DISCUSSION

Why was the servant in trouble with the king? At first, what did the king do? What did he do instead? Even though the servant owed him a great deal of money, he completely forgave his debt and gave him the chance to make a fresh start.

Did the servant show the same forgiveness towards the man who owed him some money? He quickly forgot the good example shown by the king and what a difference the king's mercy had made to his life.

What happened to the unforgiving servant? The angry king had him thrown into jail until he could repay all that he owed.

What message does Jesus give us in this parable? That we must be ready to forgive others, however large or small their wrongdoing, if we want to be forgiven ourselves. God will always forgive us, but in the same way, he expects us to show mercy to others.

#### ACTIVITY

Make copies of the series of pictures telling today's parable. After coloring, pin them on a board for the children to look at and discuss.

#### CREED

#### CLOSING PRAYER

Jesus taught us a prayer that mentions how we must forgive others when we ask forgiveness ourselves. Listen closely as we say the words that speak of forgiveness:

Our Father...

# THE UNFORGIVING SERVANT

