

A short reflection on today's Gospel Matthew 18: 21-35

Forgiveness lies at the heart of today's Gospel. It has been calculated that forgiveness comprises two thirds of Jesus' teaching, a fact which must surely reveal how crucial it is to our salvation that we forgive those who do us harm.

The king in the parable in today's Gospel isn't necessarily a good man: he is capable of imprisoning, torturing and enslaving those who anger him, but even he is not immune to the pitiful pleas of the servant who cannot pay him back the enormous amount of money he owes him. In an act of extraordinary and unexpected generosity, the king releases the servant from his entire debt. Now one would expect this servant to behave in like manner towards the unfortunate person who happens to owe him a small debt. But no! He has the debtor thrown into prison and cruelly tortured. When this reaches the ears of the king he is enraged and punishes the ungrateful servant accordingly.

Jesus is making two related things clear in this parable. The first is that compared to the corrupt king, God is inordinately generous and forgiving: if the king can find it in himself to forgive a debt, then how much more will God forgive!

Secondly, Jesus enjoins us firmly and unequivocally to forgive each other as many times as we are offended against. Otherwise, how can we expect to be forgiven by God!

Forgiveness releases us from the heavy burden of resentment which corrodes our spirit. It alters our consciousness and introduces us to the possibility of transformation and to the inner goodness which acknowledges the presence of God within us.

The one who refuses to forgive imprisons his own soul and denies the beautiful energy which comes from the forgiving heart.

Year of Prayer for Vocations to the Diocesan Priesthood - For the three priests ordained for the diocese this year, for our three seminarians, for the four men applying to begin their formal studies this year, for all those currently discerning their vocation, and for those accompanying them, that they will know and preach the message of the response to today's psalm: "The Lord is compassion and love, slow to anger, and rich in mercy."

The St Dymphna Mass will be celebrated at 7.30pm on Tuesday 19th September. This Mass is to give thanks to God for positive mental health and to pray for those who are struggling with mental health issues and those who care for them.

St Eugene's Cathedral Choir is welcoming new singers to its ranks in all voice parts. The choir sings at 12.30pm Mass each Sunday. If you have some experience of singing and would like to get involved, please contact the director of music Maghnus Monaghan on maghnusmonaghan@hotmail.com or by text on 0863728443.

St Eugene's Cathedral Choral Scholars have vacancies in male voice parts (tenor and bass). People aged over 16 in full-time education are invited to apply. Scholars are paid a stipend for their participation in choral music at the cathedral. For further information and application forms please contact Maghnus Monaghan, Director of Music at maghnusmonaghan@hotmail.com. The deadline for applications is Tuesday September 19th at 6pm.

Sympathy

We offer our sympathy to the family and friends of:

Marie Hamilton

Kathleen Browne

Joan Ferry

Baby Aiobhinn-Ann Martin

Margaret Wray

Anita Jackson

Tommy McDowell

May they rest in peace

Anniversaries

Please pray for the repose of the souls of:

Leo Kelly

Nora Griffin

Jim Callan

William Cullen

Frances McKinney

Dolly McGill

Noreen McCafferty

William & Margaret Harkin

May they rest in peace

Baptisms

We welcome as members of God's family:

Éadha Erin Hastings

Zara Mena McBrearty-Dunnion

Luca Patrick Long-McCloskey

Logan Michael McCourt-Wilson

To book a Baptism contact the Parish Office 02871 262894

Sacrament of Marriage

We congratulate the couple who celebrated the Sacrament of Marriage recently in the Cathedral

Sarah McGrory & Thomas Breslin

Collection

Last week's collection: £4,887

Parish Development: £846

Thank you for your generosity

Thank you

Fr Farren acknowledges with thanks the following donations for:

Smile Train: £5

Sight Savers: £5

Cathedral Funds: £10

Flowers for Altar: £100

Libya/Morocco Disaster: £100

Readers for 23rd /24th September

06.15 pm Oran Gartland

07.30 pm Stephen Orr

09.30 am Barry McDaid

11.00 am McGinley Readers

12.30 pm Sophia Mason

07.00 pm Philip Wilson

Culture Night Friday 22nd September at 7.00pm, we will have an evening of songs and poetry from Mary Murphy and Anne Marie Hickey in the Cathedral Hall. Free entry and all welcome. Refreshments will be served.

Exploring Poetry with Mary Murphy continues on Fridays at 11.00am in the Cathedral Hall. You are most welcome to join via the online platforms or in person.

St Eugene's Scout Group starts back on Monday 18th September in St Anne's Primary School, Rosemount. Beavers and Cubs only. Beavers (Ages 6- 7½ years old) 6.30 to 7.30pm. Cubs (Ages 8 – 11 years old) 7.00pm to 8.30pm. New members welcome . Any enquiries please contact Maria at 07955549818 or Elisha at 07724400081.

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in Ordinary Time
17th September 2023*

Saint Thérèse Triduum will take place in the Carmelite Retreat Centre Termonbacca from Friday 29th September until Sunday 1st October, beginning at 7.30pm each evening. All are welcome.

A Day Retreat in honour of Saint Michael the Archangel will take place in the Carmelite Retreat Centre Termonbacca on Friday 29th September from 10.00am to 3.00pm. This is a donation only event. Please bring a packed lunch.

The next Youth 2000 Ulster retreat will be taking place in Lough Derg, Co. Donegal between the 29th of September to the 1st of October. This retreat is for anyone aged 16-35. The retreat will include inspiring talks and workshops, fantastic music, group activities, Youth Masses, Adoration, Reconciliation, prayer, drama and games. There will be plenty of time to chill out, meet new people and find out what it means to be young and Catholic today! The retreat is donation only however if you are staying over there is a cost £35/€40 which goes to Lough Derg. Register now on www.youth2000.ie

Organ Donation Week 18th to 24th September. Organ Donation Week is a time dedicated to remembering and giving thanks to people who have enabled the “Gift of Life” to others by donating organs to those in need of life saving transplants. This week is an opportunity to raise awareness of organ donation. Have a conversation with your family, share your decision, register your decision. You could be a life saver. Further information: www.organdonationni.info

‘Host for Hospice’ - October is Foyle Hospice Coffee Morning Month: Can you ‘Host for Hospice’ and organise a Coffee Morning? For more information or to sign up to become a host, please call Ailbhe, Community Fundraising Officer, Foyle Hospice, on 028 71359888 or email: ailbhe@foylehospice.com

St Eugene's Cathedral is monitored by CCTV cameras and by two live streaming cameras. Live streaming can be viewed online at www.churchservices.tv, www.watchmcnmedia or the parish website. The Diocese of Derry Privacy Notice is displayed on the parish website and Cathedral notice board, or you may obtain a copy from the Parish Office.

Safeguarding Notice: If you have any concerns with regard to the Safeguarding of children or adults in need of protection within the Church please contact Marie Gormley, the Diocesan Designated Liaison Person (DLP) at 07596500793 or at mariegormley@derrydiocese.org or contact the Safeguarding Office, Diocesan Pastoral Centre, 164 Bishop Street, Derry, BT48 6UJ or PSNI (Police Service of **Northern**) **101 or Social Services: Gateway Services, Western HSC Trust, 71314090 and ask for the Duty Social Worker.**

Priests: Fr Paul Farren, Fr Shaun Doherty