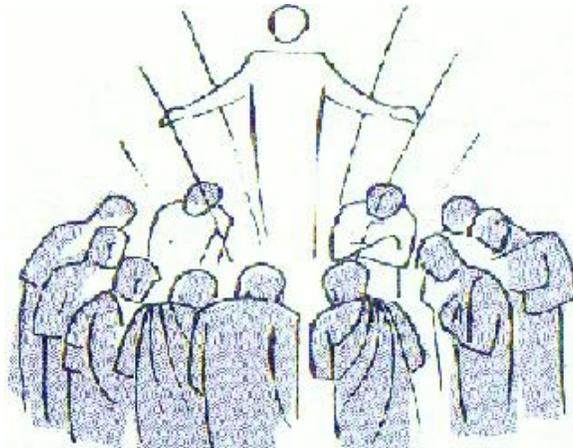


WHERE TWO OR THREE ARE GATHERED.....

The Gospel reminds us that when we gather in Jesus' name.....



We find him,...in our Sunday Celebrations...

We find him, ...in our daily Masses....

We find him,...in our prayers around the Family table...

We find him,...powerfully present in small faith sharing groups and Bible Study...

We find him,...in large "Discovering Christ" assemblies.

Because, he lives in each of us, we see him in the eyes on one another.



23rd Sunday in Ordinary Time

Spiritual Resource Journal

Sept 2017

Gospel: Matthew 18:15—

REFLECTION

Let us envision Jesus and disciples gathered in a flat spot on a hillside, looking over the City of Capernaum, for rest and relaxation. A time for peace and quiet, disturbed by a quarrel between Peter and Andrew, while the others are remembering quarrels on other occasions. Jesus intervenes and commences teaching them the importance of forgiveness, patience, the development of respect, healing and reconciliation.

Let us learn to appreciate, welcome and support each other as this Gospel teaches us!

FORGIVENESS

How often Must I Forgive? (Matt 18:21)

In his very first Sunday Homily, the Holy Father Pope Francis proclaimed,
“This is the Lord’s most powerful message! “Mercy,” God’s mercy has no borders!”

What would the world be without it?

Imagine a world with no tenderness, no compassion!

Imagine a world bound in sinfulness and selfishness with no way out!

How does God Love You!

Imagine God sacrificing himself, not just to rescue you, but to promise you eternal life with him in Heaven! That’s how boundless God’s mercy is!
“That’s how Much God loves us!”

How then can we not do anything else, but to share the same Mercy to the people around us!”

HARMONY

Harmony, God’s gift to humanity is His ongoing desire for the world. For that the nature of humans is to be in a relationship.

Discord, mistrust, and selfishness destroy relationships.

In a Christian community when this happens the ability to witness to and be agents of harmony is destroyed and God’s desire is frustrated.

For this reason, the Gospel passage sets out to give the disciples of Jesus, tools with which relationship can be maintained and harmony built.

Jesus proposes a model on conflict resolution based on respect for each other and for the advice and wisdom of 3 parties, and ultimately for the respect for the decisions of the community.

With respect to the encounter between the parties, conviction that in any struggle there is a right and a wrong on both sides. It is done in private-reducing embarrassment. It calls on us to acknowledge and accept what is good and right in the other, while recognizing what is faulty in ourselves. Doing this ensures there is no loser, no one loses face. This demands sincerity for those involved.

This Gospel calls us to discover for ourselves the mode of conflict resolutions which we use

The Jesus resolution is the only one allowed to Christians and as such must be taught in our homes and schools. It is only when we have built this new habit of mind will we be able to be true agents of God's harmony in our world.

Excerpts or Homily by Archbishop Joe Harris, CCSJ, Diocese of Port of Spain, Trinidad & Tobago

LIFE STUDY

Even among the closest of friend, sometimes we hurt each other. In this Bible story Peter asks Jesus what to do when you get hurt by someone.

1. If you were Peter, what would have been your thoughts after Jesus answered your question?
 - I don't understand
 - This is serious stuff
 - This is going to be hard to do
 - I'm anxious to give it a try
 - I'm sorry I asked
2. From this parable, what is the principle for dealing with someone who has wronged you?
 - You don't out forgive God
 - God expects you to be a pushover
 - People who can't forgive wind up in their own chain
3. To whom do you have to say "I'm sorry" the most?
 - My mom or dad
 - My spouse
 - A brother or sister
 - A friend
 - A co worker
 - My boss

4. How do you usually handle it when someone has wronged you?
 - Confront the person
 - Ignore them
 - Withdraw and sulk
 - Tell others
 - Forgive and forget
 - Hold a grudge
 - Talk to God

5. Which of the following is the hardest to do?
 - Ask for forgiveness
 - Give forgiveness
 - Forgive over and over
 - Forgive and forget

6. What have you found helpful in resolving conflict?
 - Writing out my feelings
 - Breaking off the relationship
 - Being up front with the person
 - Doing something nice for them
 - Ignoring it and hoping for the best

7. Who is someone you need to offer or receive forgiveness?
 - My mom or dad
 - My spouse
 - A brother or sister
 - A friend
 - A coworker
 - My boss

QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION AND CONVERSATION

1. Where is your favorite place to pray?
2. What experience was especially troublesome to you recently?
3. What lessons about our prayer attitude is Jesus teaching here?
 - God knows what is in our hearts
 - God wants us to be saved
4. In each of the following statements, how do you see yourselves?
 - I make excuses for myself or do I take responsibility for my faults
 - I put myself down or do I see myself as God does
 - I have a defeating attitude or I have a confident attitude.
5. How do you make a difference in another one's life?

5 REASONS WHY WE SHOULD FORGIVE AND FORGET

1. Forgiveness doesn't mean what happened is OK and it doesn't mean that that person should be welcome in your life.
2. Forgiveness is not something we do for others, it's something we do for ourselves.
3. The weak can never forgive. Forgiveness is an attitude of the strong. Gandhi
4. Forgiveness isn't always about others, it's about forgiving ourselves
5. To forgive someone is the highest form of love.

FAITH IN ACTION

Be the person who touches the lives and hearts of people.



Be a positive light to others as you put a smile on their faces.



*For in the end, **it's not what you say** that matters,
it's how you make them feel that lovingly stays in their minds.*

PRAYER

All powerful and ever loving God, your son, Jesus was lifted on high to gather all those who were scattered. This task now devolves on us the disciples of Jesus.

Send your Spirit with his gift of wisdom so that we understand our vocations to be agents of harmony and have the strength to fulfill it.

We ask this through the intercession of Mary, our Mother and Jesus, her son!

Amen!