

Religious Education

Twenty-Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time Year A

Week Beginning September 13th 2026

Gospel Reading: (Matthew 18: 23-35)

Title: Be Forgiving

First Reading (Sirach 27:30—28:7): Advice on letting go of anger, wrath, and grudges, reminding us that mercy must be given if we wish to receive it from God

Responsorial Psalm (Psalm 103:1–2, 3–4, 9–10, 11–12): *"The Lord is kind and merciful, slow to anger, and rich in compassion."*

Second Reading (Romans 14:7–9): St. Paul's reminder that we do not live or die for ourselves alone, but belong completely to the Lord.

Gospel Reading (Matthew 18:23–35): Peter asks Jesus how often he must forgive someone ("as many as seven times?"), and Jesus replies not seven times, but "seventy-seven times," followed by the parable of the unmerciful servant.

Introduction:

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

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.

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.

Gospel Reading:

One day Jesus said, '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 forgive 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.

The Word of the Lord: Thanks Be to God

Gospel Reflection: The Unforgiving Servant (Matthew 18:23-35)

In today's Gospel, Jesus tells the story of a servant who owed a king an enormous debt. When the servant pleaded for mercy, the king forgave the debt completely. However, that same servant later refused to forgive another man who owed him a much smaller amount. When the king heard what had happened, he was disappointed and reminded the servant that he should have shown the same mercy that he himself had received. This parable teaches us an important lesson about forgiveness.

God's love and mercy for us are beyond measure. Every day He forgives our mistakes, our weaknesses, and the times we fail to follow His ways. Because we have received so much forgiveness from God, Jesus calls us to forgive others from the heart. Forgiveness is not always easy. Sometimes people hurt us deeply, and feelings of anger or disappointment can remain for a long time. Yet Jesus reminds us that true discipleship means choosing mercy over resentment.

When we forgive, we do not say that what happened was acceptable. Instead, we choose to let go of hatred and trust God with our hurt. Forgiveness brings freedom and peace to our hearts. It heals relationships, strengthens communities, and allows God's love to work through us.

As members of the St Thomas More community, we are called to live out our CREST values, especially Respect, Service and Courage. It takes courage to forgive, respect to recognise the dignity of others, and service to seek reconciliation rather than revenge.

Today, let us ask ourselves:

- Is there someone I need to forgive?
- Am I grateful for God's forgiveness in my own life?
- How can I show mercy and kindness to others this week?

May we always remember that just as God forgives us generously, He invites us to extend that same forgiveness to those around us.

"Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you." (Ephesians 4:32)

Prayer:

Jesus taught us a prayer that mentions how we must forgive others when we ask forgiveness ourselves. Listen closely to the words that speaks of forgiveness. Let us prayer the 'Our Father' together.

Our Father who art in heaven.....Amen

Education Sunday 13th September 2026:

On **Sunday 13th September**, the Catholic Church in England and Wales celebrates **Education Sunday**, a special day dedicated to giving thanks for the gift of education and for all those involved in its mission. Established by the Bishops in 1848, Education Sunday is one of the oldest Days of Special Prayer in the Church's calendar. [catholic...ion.org.uk], [cbcew.org.uk]

This year's theme is inspired by the Gospel of **Matthew 18:21-35**, where Jesus teaches the importance of forgiveness, mercy and reconciliation. His call to forgive "not seven times, but seventy-seven times" reminds us that Catholic education is about much more than academic success. It is about forming young people who live with compassion, respect and a commitment to building strong and caring communities. [cbcew.org.uk], [Birmingham...ese.org.uk]

At St Thomas More Catholic School, we give thanks for our students, staff, governors, families and parish community who work together to create an environment where faith and learning flourish. We pray that God will continue to bless all involved in education and inspire us to live out our mission with wisdom, generosity and hope. *"Let all that you do be done in love."* (**1 Corinthians 16:14**)

Happy Education Sunday!

Prayer for Education Sunday:

Loving God, we thank You for the gift of education and for all those who dedicate their lives to teaching and supporting young people. Bless our students, staff, governors, families and parish communities. Help us to grow in wisdom, faith and understanding. May our schools be places where everyone is valued, encouraged and inspired to become the person You created them to be. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Exaltation of the Holy Cross: Saturday 14th
September 2026

This day is also called the Triumph of the Cross, Elevation of the Cross, Holy Cross Day, Holy Rood Day, or Rodman. The liturgy of the Cross is a triumphant liturgy. When Moses lifted up the bronze serpent over the people, it was a foreshadowing of the salvation through Jesus when He was lifted up on the Cross. Our Mother Church sings of the triumph of the Cross, the instrument of our redemption. To follow Christ, we must take up His cross, follow



Him and become obedient until death, even if it means death on the cross. We identify with Christ on the Cross and become co-redeemers, sharing in His cross.

We made the Sign of the Cross before prayer which helps to fix our minds and hearts to God. After prayer we make the Sign of the Cross to keep close to God. During trials and temptations our strength and protection is the Sign of the Cross. At Baptism we are sealed with the Sign of the Cross, signifying the fullness of redemption and that we belong to Christ. Let us look to the cross frequently, and realize that when we make the Sign of the Cross, we give our entire self to God mind, soul, heart, body, will, thoughts.