



ALL SAINTS' CHURCH

on

"Our mission is to bring the good news of Jesus Christ's love to our entire community through traditional Anglo-Catholic worship, fellowship, outreach, and Christian formation."

Our Vision: *"We strive to be a haven of healing, reconciliation, joy and peace in service to our wider community and beyond, so that our example in prayer and practice may reflect Christ's love for us all."*

THIS SUNDAY — September 17, 2023

“We Are All Accountable to God”



Forgiveness is at the very core of Jesus' teachings to His followers. Jesus not only insisted on the fact that God always offers forgiveness to the truly repentant sinner,

but also pointed out that just as God forgives our many sins, we must in the same way forgive those who sin against us.

This idea appears in the prayer that Jesus taught His disciples, known as The Lord's Prayer, and also in Jesus' exchanges with them, as in the case when Peter asks Him if he should forgive seven times another member of the church sinning against him,, thinking that seven was an excessive number of times indeed.

Jesus' reply to this question was seventy-times seven (490 times!) Of course, we should not take this number literally. I cannot fancy anyone counting the number of times they forgive someone to see if they reach this number. The number is a high multiple of seven. Seven was a number used to represent something whole or perfect. So what Jesus actually meant was that there was no limit to forgiveness.

The topic of forgiveness has been dealt with throughout history from different perspectives, and in our modern times, psychologists have been recommending

forgiveness as a way of being free from past hurts. They have recommended forgiveness even when it is not possible to have the offending person repent from their offenses.

Jesus Himself showed in His life how He was able to forgive even those who were tormenting and mocking Him during his suffering at His trial and crucifixion. He asked the Heavenly Father to forgive them not because they repented, but simply because, according to Jesus' words, "they did not know what they were doing."

Now this "not knowing what they were doing" should not be taken as meaning they were not acting consciously or in total awareness. They obviously were. It probably referred to the fact that they might not have a full awareness of the account they would have to give before the Creator in due time.

Jesus was actually asking His Father to remove their accountability for this horrible act. So incredibly loving and forgiving is Jesus' heart!

We are all accountable before our God for our thoughts, words, acts, or undue omission of them. Our all-loving Father is also a just Father. True love and mercy need to go hand in hand with justice, or it becomes a lenient and permissible kind of love that produces only crooked and entitled beings who only care about themselves and never learn to love.

The fact that we are all sinners because of our human weakness and failure should be an incentive to ask our Creator for forgiveness, provided that we also ask the Holy Spirit to enable us to make amends and change our ways for the better each new day.

Recognizing our own sinfulness and that we are all accountable before God should be the number one reason to be willing to forgive those who sin against us. After all, what can make us think that we deserve forgiveness while the rest of humanity does not?

This is much in line with what Jesus Himself taught His disciples in the Parable of the Wicked Servant, and also in line with what St. Paul says to the converts in Rome, in chapter 14 of his Letter to them, when he states, "Why do you pass judgment on your brother or sister? Or you, why do you despise your brother or sister? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God."

This idea is also key in the Book of Ecclesiasticus, chapter 27, when the writer states, "Forgive your neighbor the wrong he has done, and then your sins will be pardoned when you pray...If he has no mercy toward another like himself, can he then seek pardon for his own sins?"

Pardoning others has never and will never be easy, especially when the offense hurts us deeply, but among all the reasons that may be given to forgive others, none is truer or more biblically grounded than the fact that we are all sinners, and we are all equally accountable before God.

Fr. Carlos

Readings for The Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Ecclesiasticus 27:30-28:7 Romans 14:5-12 Psalm: 103:8-13 Matthew 18:21-35

CALENDAR

Note: We continue worshipping in our historic church. The service will also be on Zoom. The service time is 10am. Tuesday Noon Mass and Friday Morning Prayer at 10:00am are held in All Saints' St. Mary Chapel

SUNDAY September 17, 2023 The Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost

10:00am Mass in All Saints' Church

Join Zoom Meeting from our web site at www.allsaintschurch.org

Recording of Mass available before noon at www.allsaintschurch.org

Christian Formation and First Communion Instruction for Children

Ages 5-12 in the Parish Hall from 10:00am-10:45am

Christian Formation Meets next on Sunday September 24 at Noon in the Rector's Office. Book Study: "God's Secretaries: The Making of the King James Bible" by Adam Nicolson

TUESDAY Noon Mass in St. Mary Chapel

THURSDAY Spanish Class 1:00pm to 3:00pm in the Flower Room. Taught by Fr. Carlos

FRIDAY 10:00am Morning Prayer in St. Mary Chapel

SUNDAY September 24, 2023 The Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost

10:00am Mass in All Saints' Church

Join Zoom Meeting from our web site at www.allsaintschurch.org

Recording of Mass available before noon at www.allsaintschurch.org

Christian Formation and First Communion Instruction for Children

Ages 5-12 in the Parish Hall from 10:00am-10:45am

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OUR CORE VALUES:

- Welcoming strangers like old friends
- Embracing the Anglo-Catholic tradition
- Being dependable members of a caring community
- Respecting each other's differences
- Being faithful stewards of God's gift
- Remembering that God loves everyone unconditionally