

## **Day 191 – Sunday, September 27 – Forgiving Offenses**

Sunday is the Lord's Day and we can celebrate it by forgiving someone in our lives. Therefore I give you the following.

The works of mercy are broken up into two categories: the corporal works of mercy and the spiritual works of mercy. The spiritual works of mercy are designed to meet the spiritual needs of others: Instruct The Ignorant, Counsel The Doubtful, Admonish The Sinner, Bear Wrongs Patiently, Forgive Offences Willingly, Comfort The Afflicted, Pray For The Living and The Dead.

### **Forgive Offences Willingly**

Knowing that forgiveness is a process and not just an event reveals why it is so difficult to forgive. We want it to be over and done with in a single moment, but in reality it takes a serious emotional and spiritual commitment. While difficult, there are few skills more important in life than forgiveness. There isn't a person on the planet that hasn't needed to give forgiveness.

To help us forgive, Father Mike delivers two incredibly simple but transformative truths about forgiveness. The first is, order matters. Father Mike's three-step process on how to forgive is incredibly insightful, but perhaps the most important part about the process is in adhering to the order. Here is the order he prescribes:

1. Acknowledge that there is something to forgive.
2. Count precisely what an individual has caused you.
3. Don't say it's ok or what they did doesn't matter.

Count the cost and then make a decision to release them of their debt. Skipping one of these steps or trying to do it in a different order would be to your detriment. Think about it this way. About ten years ago, my dad decided to teach me how to change an electrical socket. He unscrewed the front casing and told me the first step is to pull the socket out from within the wall. The immediate result was a sharp electrical shock that caused my dad to jump back in pain. He looked at me with a sheepish grin and said, "first step, turn off the power!" Order seriously matters when changing an electrical outlet, and order seriously matters when trying to forgive others.

The second truth is that forgiveness frees both the forgiven and the forgiver. Withholding forgiveness is like drinking poison and expecting the other person to die. Those who are unwilling to forgive are burdened by an unshakable misery. This is a fate that robs us of the joy and the peace we so desperately seek. Identify someone in your life whom you need to forgive or ask for forgiveness, then for your own sake and theirs, follow Father Mike's advice. Go to Jesus, acknowledge the debt, count the cost, and forgive willingly. Remember, this is a process. Perseverance will relieve you and those who need forgiving of the burden you carry.

*In the light of eternity, we're here for a very short time, really. We're here for one thing, ultimately: to learn how to love, because God is love. - James Finley*

Sincerely,  
Fr. Jim Kaptein