

Seeking Reconciliation with Those Who Have Hurt You

This weekend marks the beginning of JUBILEE YEAR OF MERCY as proclaimed by Pope Francis. It is a year of reconciliation between brothers and sisters from all walks of life. Principally, we are invited to personal reflection in order to deepen our faith by experiencing the sacrament of reconciliation.

It is our hope that during the JUBILEE YEAR OF MERCY we collectively foster the treasures of not only receiving forgiveness but also offering it to others. Each of us have an opportunity to be merciful as Jesus demonstrated and the Gospel teaches us. This is not an exclusive purview of bishops, priests, deacons and the religious.

In my personal spiritual journey I've arrived at a beautiful juncture. I carry with me an index card of the names of people who have hurt me, created havoc in my life and caused many sleepless nights. Everyone on this card is related to my tenure in public service- I am an elected public official- and I do not have a personal relationship with any of them. But this card is a physical reminder- a tool – which I use to regularly pray for them. At best I would like to love them at worse I have pity for them. What I no longer hold is returning to them what they have directed to me; hatred, misgivings, ill will. And here's the best part. I am deliberately seeking reconciliation with all them in unique and mysterious ways the Holy Spirit is creating for me. I have been scratching names off that index card one by one. And I know that I will be throwing out the card in due time. Nobody left on it, nobody new to add to it

This proclamation by the Holy Father is a turning point in our church. It is a wonderful opportunity to increasingly build our church through tangible acts of love and compassion. Jesus teaches us in the Sermon on the Mount: **“BLEST ARE THEY WHO SHOW MERCY, MERCY SHALL BE THEIRS”**.

As a community of parishioners let us all welcome those with broken spirits and extend a loving embrace to them. Let us do this with humility and without judgment in full recognition that we are all sinners.

This weekend, after each mass we will offer a book titled “EVERYBODY NEEDS TO FORGIVE SOMEBODY”. It encapsulate eleven, short and powerful true stories. We ask that each family take one. When you complete it consider passing it along to other family members and friends. We are confident that you will be truly inspired.

Now let us pray...

MAY THE HOLY SPIRIT TOUCH EACH ONE OF US THIS DAY AND IGNITE A FIRE IN OUR HEARTS. LET US BRING CHANGE TO EACH OF US SO THAT WE MAY FOSTER A GREATER LOVE THROUGHOUT OUR TROUBLED WORLD. MAY JESUS KEEP US VIGILANT IN BEING OPEN TO OPPORTUNITIES TO BE MERCIFUL TO OTHERS- AS HE IS MERCIFUL TO US

WE ASK THIS THROUGH CHRIST OUR LORD, AMEN

Joe D'Amore- Parishioner