

Talk to P3 Parents on Sunday 9th January 2022

“What Does Jesus Teach Us About Forgiveness?”

The first thing to say is that quote of Jesus from John 3:16 “God so loved the world that he gave his only Son that Whoever believes in him may not be lost but may have eternal life”.

Jesus by his Divine nature is a rescuer, a Saviour, like lifeboatmen & women, who go into the storms of life and bring people safely home.

The most powerful symbol of Jesus’ ‘Healing Love’ is the cross, that Jesus dies on the cross to pay the price for reconciling or healing the world of sin and evil.

Sin, when, we commit sins, it causes a breakdown in the bond of love. When we tell lies, when we are violent, aggressive, disrespectful, rude, greedy and selfish – all these things as well as immoral sins.... They all cause a breakdown in the relationship of mutual love. When we feel guilty about our past life, our mistakes and errors of judgement, it is only ultimately God who can rescue us, and bring us back to a state of inner peace and reconciliation.

Jesus reveals that forgiveness many times in the Gospels by how he encounters sinners and also by the parables that he teaches us.

In terms of sinners, early in Marks Gospel, he encounters a paralysed man and heals him of his paralysis, but the greater miracle, he emphasises is healing the man of the paralysis of his sins.

He encounters Zacchaeus a Jewish Tax Collector, greedy and corrupt, he shares a meal with him and in the process reconciles him to God.

He encounters a woman caught committing adultery, whom the crowd want to stone to death, he challenges the crowds, by stating, ‘Let those without sin, cast the first stone’.

He reminds the world that we are all sinners and none of us should be so arrogant as to believe that we don’t need the mercy and forgiveness of God. Every day we should thank God for our health and ask for the strength not to give into sin.

When we sin, we lose our way, like the lost sheep who goes off on the wrong path. The culture of evil pushes the sinner into a sphere of darkness, fear and confusion. The criminal underworld is where no one can be trusted and you don’t know who your true friends are. People become objects of scorn and abuse rather than subjects of love and dignity.

The parable of the Prodigal Son is a powerful teaching from Jesus as to how the lost sinner, in a world of sin, debauchery and corruption can be brought safely home by coming to their senses, repenting of their sins and turning back to their spiritual father.

The very words of the Prayer, The Our Father, that Jesus teaches us, is a prayerful invitation to come home to Our heavenly Father, to forgive us our trespasses, to protect us from giving in to temptation and delivering us from evil. – This is a short prayer that you should recite regularly with your children, to help them see and understand the message that Jesus wants to protect us from all evil, because he loves us. And because he loves us, when we truly express sorrow for our sins, then our sins may be forgiven.

Your responsibility is therefore to teach your child in a simple but honest way that the more we love each other, the more important it is that we seek forgiveness from one another.

A true Christian is never bitter, a true Christian is always merciful but also striving to be honest, to speak the truth, even if the truth is hard to face. It was Jesus who by speaking the Truth about love and forgiveness, was condemned to death on the cross. He wants his sacrifice on the cross, to be an eternal sacrifice for the sins of the world. So, to atone for our sins we should abide by his teachings, live by his ways and help to reconcile and heal our world that is wounded by sin.

God Bless you All,

Canon Jeremy C Bath

Parish Priest