

St Joseph's Catholic Parish

Twelfth Sunday in Ordinary Time
Year B, 23 June, 2024

Embracing the communities of
Cherbourg, Goomeri, Murgon,
Proston and Wondai



Unity in Diversity ... being one in Christ through Baptism!



Forgiveness and the Holy Spirit

"I just can't forgive and forget."
When I respond with "Of course you can't!" or "You don't have to!" it's not uncommon to see a stunned expression of disbelief. *Isn't that what our faith teaches us we have to do?*

No, it's not. In fact, the Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches exactly the opposite! Paragraph 2843 tells us that it is not in our power to stop feeling an offense, nor to forget about it.

If we find ourselves battling with unforgiveness, we can be assured that it is not our feeling that is the problem, nor our remembering. They need healing and care, yes, but our emotions and our memory are marvelous, God-created human faculties that are actually standing witness to the reality and the gravity of the harm that happened. I have written before on **how feeling anger is actually part of the path of forgiveness.**

There is an untying or unbinding that needs to happen if we desire to forgive from the depth of our heart, as Jesus invites us. This unbinding can only happen if we yield and surrender. But it is a divine work,

made possible by the victory of Jesus in his dying, rising, and ascending. Slowly but surely – sometimes in cathartic moments, other times in painful and vigilant waiting – his victory becomes our victory. We truly become like Christ – which means we share in the anointing of the Holy Spirit. Remember that 'Christ' means 'anointed one', and 'Christian' refers to one who shares in that anointing. It is the Holy Spirit who transforms our hearts as we walk the path of forgiveness.

The Catechism describes it this way:

It is there, in fact, "in the depths of the heart," that everything is bound and loosed. It is not in our power not to feel or to forget an offense; but the heart that offers itself to the Holy Spirit turns injury into compassion and purifies the memory in transforming the hurt into intercession. (CCC 2843).

Unhealed wounds

Every offence wounds both the perpetrator and the victim. Unhealed wounds fester in both. It is within our wounds that the evil one tends to find his playground. Ignatius of Loyola describes the devil as "the enemy of our human nature". In his hatred and envy, he is eager to torment us. Human scenes of harm or neglect (whether emotional, physical, sexual, or spiritual) offer the devil fertile soil to sow his lies – lies about who God is and lies about who we are as God's beloved children.

If and when we find the courage to face our deeper wounds, we can welcome the anointing of the Holy Spirit. He is the Paraclete – the one who comforts, consoles, counsels, encourages, and soothes.

continued on next page...

Sunday Mass Times

Murgon		
WEEK	DAY	TIME
every	Sunday	8.00am
Wondai		
WEEK	DAY	TIME
every	Saturday	5.00pm
Proston		
WEEK	DAY	TIME
every	Saturday	9.00am
Goomeri		
WEEK	DAY	TIME
every	Sunday (except 5th Sunday)	6.00pm
Gayndah		
WEEK	DAY	TIME
every	1st, 3rd, 5th Sundays	10.30am
every	2nd, 4th Sundays	9.00am
Cherbourg		
WEEK	DAY	TIME
5	Sunday	4.30pm
Weekday Mass Times		
12 noon, Wednesday, Gayndah		
5.00pm, Wednesday, Wondai		
9.00am, 2nd, 4th Thursdays, School/Parish Mass, Murgon		
9.00am, 1st, 3rd Thursdays, Castra		
Holy Hour for Peace		
Wondai, 4.00pm to 5.00pm, Wednesday, before Mass		

Today's readings

Job 38: 1, 8-11; Corinthians 5: 14-17;
Mark 4: 34-41

Response:

Give thanks to the Lord, his love is everlasting.

Gospel Acclamation:

Alleluia, alleluia! A great prophet has appeared among us; God has visited his people. Alleluia!

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Think of a little girl with a wound. Does she want Mom or Dad to put ointment on it? Not normally! She probably needs a good deal of reassurance that it's going to be okay. *Is it going to hurt?* Actually, yes. But it will also soothe and help it get better. She may need to breathe and calm down first before she is okay with them tending to the wound.

We are invited to approach our heavenly Father as little children, and to welcome the anointing of the Holy Spirit – especially when we find ourselves feeling the wounds of past harm.

When I do this personally, I find it incredibly helpful to have visible reminders of who God is and who he has been for me. I also believe strongly that Jesus, dying on the Cross, was also speaking to me when he said "Behold, your mother!" Mary has very much been a mother to me on my own healing journey, giving me the emotional and spiritual safety to receive the anointing of the Holy Spirit with confidence.

The healing touch of the Holy Spirit transforms

The anointing of the Holy Spirit comforts and consoles. If we allow him to touch us where we are wounded, healing will always happen – sometimes with a cathartic release or a dramatic unbinding, but more commonly with slow and steady doses of his healing balm. That is why healthy Christian community is so important. We often need others to point out and celebrate the progress we are making. We can count on the devil to discourage us whenever he sees an opportunity. The Holy Spirit works through our companions, our mentors, our spiritual guides, and our therapists to spur us on with encouragement by celebrating every step of progress. Like little children who are learning and growing, we need a cloud of witnesses cheering us on.

Notice in the Catechism quote that healing of past harm is not a matter of erasing, but of transforming. As the Holy Spirit anoints us, we become truly Christ-like. Jesus' wounds are not erased – he actually shows them to the apostles after his Resurrection. But those wounds are transformed, as is he. He is now seated at the right hand of the Father, interceding for us. The more we receive true healing in the depths of our hearts, the more we become like Christ. Injury is changed into empathy and compassion. Our wounds become (like Christ's) sources of healing and transformation for others. Like him, we become powerful intercessors.

No shortcuts

I offer a caution here! With the word 'intercession' comes a risk of shortcutting the process. Becoming Christ-like means willingly suffering, dying, rising, and ascending with him. We don't like the whole powerless part, so we have a human tendency to grab onto something that gives us the illusion of control. If I can be an intercessor (praying for those who have hurt me) then I can feel in control – and I can conveniently keep all attention away from my unhealed wounds. And little or no transformation will happen. Only when I willingly and freely walk the path of Jesus, the healing path of the Paschal Mystery, can I truly experience the transformation of forgiveness.

True intercession comes from a place of already won victory. It is the risen and ascended Jesus who is our intercessor at the right hand of the Father. As we come to share more and more in his victory, our healed wounds become a powerful place of intercession on behalf of those who have harmed us. To the extent that we resist and refuse to go into the depths of our heart – where the wounds are – we will remain bound up in unforgiveness and resentment. We can 'intercede' feverishly in that case – and we will only be making an idol out of the one who has harmed



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We pray for those who are sick:
Orlando Dyrit; Wendy Heidemann;
David McIntosh.

us, orienting ourselves around him or her rather than worshiping the living God.

As the Letter to the Hebrews teaches us, Jesus is our great high priest who truly became one flesh and one blood with us and has now brought our human flesh and blood into the heavenly sanctuary, where he reigns victoriously with the Father. Their Holy Spirit allows all that is Christ's to be ours. That means willingly entering into the depths of suffering and dying with him – knowing that he has gone there first. All the while we will likely find ourselves recoiling with a fear of betrayal, resisting any experience of powerlessness, and both wanting and not wanting such intense love. The Holy Spirit will comfort and encourage us. We will discover the newness of the Resurrection and power of the Ascension, and come to share more and more in the great triumph of his Mercy.



The Serenity Prayer

God, grant me the serenity
To accept the things I cannot change;
Courage to change the things I can;
And wisdom to know the difference.