



The Holy See

POPE FRANCIS **ANGELUS** *Saint Peter's Square*

Sunday, 13 September 2020 [\[Multimedia\]](#)

Dear Brothers and Sisters, Good morning,

In the parable in today's Gospel reading, that of the merciful King (cf. *Mt* 18:21-35), we find this plea twice: "Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything" (vv. 26, 29). The first time it is pronounced by the servant who owes his master ten thousand talents, an enormous sum. Today it would be millions and millions of euros. The second time it is repeated by another servant of the same master. He too is in debt, not towards his master, but towards the same servant who has that enormous debt. And his debt is very small, maybe like a week's wages.

The heart of the parable is the indulgence the master shows towards his servant with the bigger debt. The evangelist underlines that, "moved with compassion the master" — we should never forget this word of Jesus: "with compassion", Jesus always had compassion — "moved with compassion the master let him go and forgave him the loan" (v. 27). An enormous debt, therefore a huge remission! But that servant, immediately afterwards, shows himself to be pitiless towards his companion, who owed him a modest amount. He does not listen to him, he is extremely hostile against him and has him thrown in prison until his debt is paid back (cf. v. 30), that small debt. The master hears about this and, indignant, calls the wicked servant back and has him condemned (cf. vv. 32-34): "I forgave you a great deal and you are not capable of forgiving so little?".

In the parable we find two different attitudes: God's — represented by the king who forgives a lot, because God always forgives — and that of the man. In the divine attitude justice is pervaded with mercy, whereas the human attitude is limited to justice. Jesus exhorts us to open ourselves with courage to the strength of forgiveness, because in life not everything can be resolved with justice. We know this. There is a need for that merciful love, which is also at the basis of the Lord's answer to Peter's question, which precedes the parable. Peter's question goes like this: "Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him?" (v. 21). And Jesus replies, "I do not say to you, seven times but seventy times seven" (v. 22). In the symbolic language of the Bible this means that we are called to forgive always.

How much suffering, how many wounds, how many wars could be avoided if forgiveness and mercy were the style of our life! Even in families, even in families. How many disunited families, who do not know how to forgive each other. How many brothers and sisters bear this resentment within. It is necessary to apply merciful love to all human relationships: between spouses, between parents and children, within our communities, in the Church and also in society and politics.

Today, in the morning, as I was celebrating Mass, I paused, touched by a phrase in the first Reading from the book of Sirach. The phrase says, “Remember the end of your life, and cease from enmity”. A beautiful phrase! Think of the end! Think that you will be in a coffin... and will you take hatred there? Think of the end, stop hating! Stop the resentment. Let’s think of this phrase that is very touching. Remember the end of your life, and cease from enmity”.

It is not easy to forgive because in moments of calm we say: “Yes, this person has done so many things to me but I have done many too. Better to forgive so as to be forgiven”. But then resentment returns like a bothersome fly in the summer that keeps coming back. Forgiveness isn’t something we do in a moment, it is something continuous, against that resentment, this hatred that keeps coming back. Let’s think of our end and stop hating.

Today’s parable helps us to grasp fully the meaning of that phrase we recite in the Lord’s Prayer: “*And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us*” (cf. Mt 6:12). These words contain a decisive truth. We cannot demand God’s forgiveness for ourselves if we in turn do not grant forgiveness to our neighbour. It is a condition: think of your end, of God’s forgiveness, and stop hating. Reject resentment, that bothersome fly that keeps coming back. If we do not strive to forgive and to love, we will not be forgiven and loved either.

Let us entrust ourselves to the maternal intercession of the Mother of God: May she help us to realise how much we are in debt to God, and to remember that always, so that our hearts may be open to mercy and goodness.

After the Angelus, the Holy Father continued:

Dear brothers and sisters, in recent days, a series of fires have devastated the refugee camp of Moria on the Island of Lesbos, leaving thousands of people without a shelter, even a precarious one. [I still remember my visit there](#) and [the appeal I launched together with the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew and Archbishop Ieronymos of Athens](#), to “do our part towards giving migrants, refugees and asylum-seekers a humane reception in Europe” (16 April 2016). I express my solidarity and closeness to all the victims of these dramatic events.

In addition, in these weeks we are witnessing numerous popular protests all over the world — in many parts — expressing the growing unease of civil society in the face of particularly critical

political and social situations. While I urge the demonstrators to present their demands peacefully, without giving in to the temptation of aggression and violence, I appeal to all those with public and governmental responsibilities to listen to the voice of their fellow citizens and to meet their just aspirations, ensuring full respect for human rights and civil liberties. Finally, I invite the ecclesial communities living in such contexts, under the guidance of their Pastors, to work for dialogue, always in favour of dialogue, and in favour of reconciliation — we have talked about forgiveness, about reconciliation.

Due to the pandemic, this year the traditional [Collection for the Holy Land](#) was moved from Good Friday to today, the eve of the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross. In today's context, this Collection is an even greater sign of hope and solidarity and closeness with the Christians living in the Land where God became flesh and died and rose again for us. Today we make a spiritual pilgrimage, in spirit, with our imagination, with the heart, to Jerusalem, where, as the Psalm says, are our sources (cf. *Ps 87:7*), and we make a gesture of generosity towards those communities.

I greet you all, faithful of Rome and pilgrims from various countries. In particular, I greet the cyclists suffering from Parkinson's disease who have travelled the Via Francigena from Pavia to Rome. You have been fast! Thank you for your witness. I greet the Madonna Addolorata Confraternity of Monte Castello di Vibio. I see that there is also a *Laudato Si'* Community: thank you for what you do; and thank you for the meeting yesterday here, with Carlin Petrini and all the leaders who are going forward in this struggle for the protection of creation.

I greet all of you, all of you, especially the Italian families who in August dedicated themselves to the hospitality of pilgrims. They are many! I wish you all a good Sunday. Please do not forget to pray for me. Enjoy your lunch and *Arrivederci!*