



Faith in Five- Children  
Ordinary Time Week 24

- 1. Read Matthew 18: 21-35 as a family. What does Peter ask Jesus?** Peter wants to know how often we must forgive somebody who sins against us. Jesus tells him 7 times seventy-seven. **Does that seem like a strange number of times?** In the bible, the number 7 is significant. It is used to show completeness, wholeness or divine fulfillment. In the parable Jesus tells about the debtor, we see the King have mercy on him. **Does the debtor in turn have mercy and forgive those who owe him?** No, the debtor denies forgiveness to his fellow servant. Like the debtor, we have all struggled to be as forgiving as our Heavenly Father is. This gospel reading truly challenges us to forgive as we have been forgiven. Pray about something or somebody you have had a hard time forgiving. Ask Jesus to help us “forgive from the bottom of our heart.”
- 2. Who are St. Andrew Tim Tae-Gon, Paul Chong Ha-Sang?** These saints were Korean Martyrs from the 1700s. A Korean layperson by the name of Yi Seung-hun was baptized in Beijing, China. He brought back saint statues, rosaries, and catechisms to teach his fellow Koreans about Jesus! St. Andrew and St. Paul are descended from those first Korean Catholics. It was still illegal to be Catholic in Korea! St. Paul would smuggle missionaries into the country so he and his fellow Catholics could receive the sacraments. This process was always a risk to his life! St. Andrew was the first native Korean priest. He was eventually arrested and killed along with many other brave Korean Catholic men and women. Let’s pray for the zeal, courage, fortitude and joy of these holy Korean men and women. We must also pray for all nations to have religious freedom.
- 3. What are Ember Days?** Ember days are a beautiful tradition in the Catholic faith. They are quarterly periods of prayer and fasting in the Church’s calendar. Four times a year, the Church sets aside a Wednesday, Friday and Saturday for penance, even outside Lent. Wednesday represents the day Judas betrayed Jesus, Friday for the day Our Lord died and Saturday to remember his time in the tomb. While no longer a requirement in the Church, many families today again observe Ember days to deepen their liturgical living. **When are the ember days?** While the actual dates on the calendar vary, the winter ember days follow St. Lucy’s day (Dec. 13), the spring ember days follow Ash Wednesday, the summer ember days follow Pentecost and the fall ember days follow the Exaltation of the Holy Cross (Sept 14). The ember days for fall 2023 are September 20, 22, and 23. **How do we observe these days?** They follow regular fasting rules (1 regular sized meal and 2 smaller meals that don’t equal the size of the regular meal) but

you can be creative with your penance. Giving up snacking, desserts, TV, music in the car are other ideas.

4. **Apologetics- Why do Catholics use incense?** The smoke of incense is powerfully symbolic in many ways. The rising smoke symbolizes our prayers rising up to God. It also represents sanctification and purification. These are both requirements before we dwell forever with God in Heaven. **Is this a biblical practice?** As symbolic of prayer we read in Psalm "Let my prayer be counted as incense before thee, and the lifting up of my hands as an evening sacrifice!" (Psalm 141:2). Not only has incense been used since the beginning of christian liturgy, it was part of the Jewish tradition that God himself commanded to Moses "You shall make an altar to burn incense upon.....a perpetual incense before the Lord throughout your generations." (Exodus 30:34-38) We also read about incense in the book of Revelations "And another angel stood at the altar with a golden censer; and he was given much incense to mingle with the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar before the throne; and the smoke of the incense rose with the prayers of the saints from the hand of the angel before God" (Revelations 8:3-4). Holy Mass invokes all our senses! Seeing and smelling incense at church reminds us of Heaven and helps us understand we are participating in divine worship.
5. **Catechism- What are the spiritual works of mercy?** The Spiritual Works of Mercy are: Instruct the Ignorant, Counsel the Doubtful, Admonish Sinners, Forgive Offenses, Comfort the Afflicted, Bear Wrongs Patiently and Pray for the Living and the Dead.

**REVIEW QUESTION: What does vocation mean?** A vocation is God's call and invitation to love and serve him. Two of the most prevalent vocations are serving God through the Sacrament of Marriage or Holy Orders. Within our vocations, we serve God by loving our neighbor as ourselves. Living out that commandment, our vocations are our vehicles to Heaven!

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