

THINK OF THE COMMANDMENTS, HATE NOT YOUR NEIGHBOR...

Over the last few Sundays—including this one—the Apostle Peter has been the primary figure in dialogue with Jesus. Three Sundays ago, Peter made a profession of faith, acknowledging Jesus as the Son of the living God, as the Messiah.

Last Sunday, Jesus rebuked Peter for trying to dissuade Him regarding the mission the Heavenly Father had entrusted to Him.

And this Sunday, Peter asks Jesus: what is the limit of forgiveness? If my brother offends me, how many times must I forgive?

In this question, Peter highlights a reality of our personal lives: as we go through life, we accumulate wounds that generate deep sadness and transform into anger and rage—what we know as resentment.

These wounds can be caused by a word or gesture we cannot forget; they can stem from a breakup, a betrayal, or a disappointment. There are also wounds within the family that accumulate over the years. That is why we find it difficult to break the chains that resentment leaves in our lives, making forgiveness impossible.

First, we must say that forgiveness begins in the heart of the person who decides not to remain chained to the wrong they suffered; it means breaking the cycle of vengeance.

But why forgive?

1. Because resentment wears us down, embitters us, and isolates us.

2. *The Book of Sirach, in the first reading, reminds us: if you forgive, then when you ask for forgiveness, your sins will be forgiven.*

3. *To forgive is to walk the path of liberation that leads to peace.*

4. *We must remember that we live for the Lord, as the Apostle Paul tells us in the Letter to the Romans; and living for the Lord means keeping His commandments in mind, harboring no resentment, and forgiving.* 5.- *Jesus, through the Gospel of Saint Matthew, presents the parable of the Kingdom of Heaven to us. The king is God our Father, who feels compassion for the debtor and forgives his debt.*

Before asking us to forgive, He allows us to experience being fully forgiven.

That is why, when reciting the Our Father, we ask God to forgive our trespasses, just as we forgive those who trespass against us.

God knows our sins and chooses to forgive us—as many times as necessary.

We might ask ourselves: "But how can I forgive?"

1.- *Desire to be free from the bondage of resentment, bitterness, and anger.*

2.- *Do it in the name of Jesus... and say, "I forgive you in the name of Jesus."*

Do not forget that forgiveness involves three dimensions: God Himself, ourselves, and others.

3.- *Finally, pray for those who have hurt us. And persevere with patience to attain the grace of forgiveness.*

May our Mother in heaven—Refuge of Sinners and Mother of Love—obtain this blessing for us. Amen.