

Saint Anthony of Padua Parish

With the Eucharist at the centre, we are a community desiring to be saints, sent out to love like Jesus and proclaim Him in every circumstance.

SEVENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

FEBRUARY 24, 2019

How We Can Forgive our Enemies

Jesus commands us to forgive (Lk 6:37), but when does forgiving become enabling? In other words, when does forgiving mean giving people permission to hurt and continue causing harm? So, the question today is: How are we supposed to fulfill Jesus' command?

Let's look at the Scriptures: "Jesus said to his disciples: 'I say to you that listen: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you'" (Lk 6:27-28). The answer to our question comes from the definition of love, which, according to St. Thomas Aquinas, means to will the good of the other. This doesn't mean having good feelings to those who hurt us, but wanting what's good for them, including that they stop sinning, that they change, maybe even that they are punished—why? Because that's good for them.

Forgiveness does not mean excusing people's sins, as if they were acceptable or unintentional. [...] There are some people who try to keep peace by not standing up to aggressors, but that's not love, but a lack of courage. Forgiveness means, "What you did against me was wrong," but I will try, if possible, to re-establish good relations with you (Germain Grisez, *The Way of the Lord Jesus*).

Three weeks ago, we talked about challenging ourselves as a community and me as a priest not holding back. So now I'm going to challenge you: One reason why we have trouble with loving our enemies is because we think love means being nice. Four times now we've talked about not being nice, because nice people tend not to have courage, and tend to not stand up against evil. Of course, be kind! But the word 'nice' in our culture has been sapped of the possibility of doing the right thing which hurts people. Saying "No" to our kids' wants isn't nice, but it's good! Just punishment isn't nice, but it's virtuous! Standing outside B.C. Women's Hospital and praying for an end to abortion doesn't feel nice, but it's the right, loving, and respectful thing to do. Niceness is a shallow idea deeply rooted in our culture, and it's one reason why we struggle to forgive others, can't stand up for ourselves, and can't confront evil. I've even met people in positions of authority who are charged to do the right thing, to stand up against evil, but choose not to because they want to be considered nice. And I want to say to them, "You're such a coward. We're depending on you to help us, but you want to be nice."

Jesus wasn't nice the way our culture understands it; He was virtuous. On April 7, we'll hear Jesus say to the woman who committed adultery, "From now on do not sin again" (Jn 8:11), because adultery is gravely wrong. Teach your children to be virtuous, don't talk about being nice, and then they won't get taken advantage of. [...]

Whatever we choose to do, we'll know our heart is pure and strong if we do the simpler part of what Jesus teaches: "Bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you" (Lk 6:27-28). Blessing in this case (eulogeite) means to speak well of our enemies. We're not going to lie and cover up their sins, but we're also not going to take



advantage of their sins and publicize them needlessly. As for prayer, there was a point in my life when I didn't want to pray for some enemies, because I thought, in my immaturity, that by praying for them, they'd have an easy life, and I didn't want them to have that gift. That's wrong on two counts: 1) I didn't want what's good for my enemies, which isn't love; 2) I didn't want what God actually wanted for them, which isn't an easy life and getting off easy, but a good life, meaning that they stop sinning.

When Jesus says, "If anyone strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also; and from anyone who takes away your coat do not withhold even your shirt" (Lk 6:29), all Scripture commentators say that this doesn't mean being a doormat and enabling people, but avoiding retaliation (Ignatius Catholic Study Bible, 118. Pablo T. Gadenz, *The Gospel of Luke*, 133).

Forgiveness is a choice, not a feeling. It starts with the choice to not hurt people back, to pray for them, and then that eventually changes our feelings towards them. Only with time will the bitterness and resentment fade.

Yes, forgiveness can be genuine even if we don't feel it. We can choose to will someone's good, while at the same time still feeling the pain they caused us, still feeling that we want to get back at them—that's just a temptation, not a lack of forgiveness.

Forgiving is different from forgetting. We can forgive but maybe never forget. That's why Jesus tells us that we must forgive "seventy times seven" (Mt 18:22). The pain may always come back, and so we'll have to forgive once again.

Jesus says today, "Love your enemies, do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return. Your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High; for he is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked. Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful" (Lk 6:35-36).

In this season on the Eucharist, we need to think about the Eucharist and our enemies. St. John Paul II said that "eucharistic worship constitutes the soul of all Christian life," (*Dominicae Cena*)

...continued inside

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 9:00 am—12:00 noon
 1:00 pm—3:00 pm
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 please call the office anytime.
Web: *stanthonyvan.com*
Email: *office@stanthonysvancouver.org*

Parish Registration

Our parish family warmly welcomes new parishioners. Please register by filling out a registration form located in the vestibule or the Parish Office. If you are registered and moving, please advise the parish office.

Sunday Masses

Saturday 5:00 pm
 Sunday 8:00 am, 10:00 am, 12:00 pm

Weekdays

	Masses	Confessions
Monday	8:15 am	8:00 to 8:10 am
Tuesday	7:30 pm	
Wednesday & Thursday	8:15 am	8:00 to 8:10 am
Friday	8:00 am	7:45 to 7:55 am
Saturday	9:00 am	9:45 am

Confession

Saturday afternoon 3:45 pm to 4:45 pm
 1st Saturday each month 9:45 am to 1:00 pm;
 1:30 pm to 4:30 pm;
 7:00 pm to 9:45 pm

Eucharistic Adoration enter at 1365 West 73rd Avenue
 Tuesday to Friday: 9:00 am to 10:00 pm

First Saturday of each month: 9:30 am to 9:30 pm in the church during all-day confessions.

First Friday of each month: 8:45 am to 10:00 am in the church followed by **Benediction**.

RITE OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF ADULTS (RCIA)

Please call the parish office for more information on RCIA classes and other Sacraments.

St. Anthony of Padua School

Kindergarten to Grade 7
 1370 West 73rd Avenue,
 Vancouver, BC V6P 3E9
 Principal: Michael Perry
 Telephone: 604.261.4043
 Website: *stanthonyofpaduaschool.ca*
 School Email: *office@stanthonyofpaduaschool.ca*

Weekday Masses & Intentions

Day	Feast or Memorial	Missal Page	Intention
Mon., Feb. 25	Ferial	509	Battista Piazzon †
Tues Feb. 26	Ferial	511	Kimbing Chuang †
Wed., Feb. 27	Ferial	513	Maria Legaspi
Thurs. Feb. 28	Ferial	515	Cecille Cadag
Fri., Mar. 1	Ferial	517	Gaspare Leone †
Sat., Mar. 2	Ferial	519	Stanley & Yu Yen Tup Chong †

Prayers for the Sick At Holy Mass we remember the sick including:

Nita Carvajal, Nung Chum, Isobel Clancy, Nick De Vos, Tamara Dixon, Elaine dos Remedios, Kathleen Francis, Teresa Gaio, Feli Hempl, Cecile Hernandez, Yvonne Kharoubeh, Molly Loui-Ying, Huguette Piché, Barney Rousseau, Therese Rozario, Christina Sayo, Liliana Taylor, Fernando Tiago, Cynthia Wing, Theresa Yoshioka.



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March 1, 8, 15, 22 Church Lower Hall
7pm-8:30pm Cost: \$15

For more information, contact Alex at adjauhari529@gmail.com

Upcoming Homily Themes

March 2 & 3
The Fruits of the Adoration

March 9 & 10
*Step Aside Marie Kondo,
 Here Comes Jesus*

March 17
*God is Always Faithful to Us.
 Are We Faithful to Him?*



ANNOUNCEMENTS

ALL DAY CONFESSIONS & ADORATION: SATURDAY, MARCH 2ND

CONFESSION TIMES
9:45 AM — 1:00 PM
1:30 PM — 4:30 PM
7:00 PM — 9:45 PM



SIGN-UP SHEETS FOR ADORATION ARE IN THE FOYER OF THE CHURCH

PRAISE & WORSHIP AT 7:30 PM



It's **Quinquagesima Sunday!** Please join us gear up for the season of Lent. **The CWL ladies** will be serving Chicken Congee with Spring Rolls during its Coffee Shop & Bake Sale **on March 3 after the 8:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m. Masses.** If you wish to donate some baked goods please bring them to the ladies before Mass. Thank you for supporting our bake sales!

Do you have the desire for a deeper relationship with God through better understanding of the Sacred Scripture and to be more confident in sharing our faith?

Join fellow parishioners at the

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For more information, please email Agnes/Jessica at stbv.sapv@gmail.com

<https://steubenvilleconferences.com>

School Announcements

The Grade 7 students of St. Anthony of Padua School would like to thank all the parishioners who supported their rosary bracelet sale over the previous two weekends. It was a big success! Proceeds will go to the Class of 2019 Graduation Fund which will offset the various costs of their graduation ceremony, dinner and related activities.



Wednesday, March 6 to Sunday,

April 14 Take part in this campaign by committing to an hour to stand vigil at

West 32nd Avenue and Willow Street, by BC Women's Hospital. Our parish has designated 4 days: Thursday, Mar. 7, Friday, Mar. 8, Saturday, Mar. 9 and Sunday, Mar. 10 to participate in the vigil. You can sign up for an hour on any one of these days by filling out one of the cards in the pews or calling the Parish Office.

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and teaches us how to love our neighbour. “[The Eucharist] shows us... what value each person... has in God's eyes, if Christ offers Himself equally to each one, under the species of bread and wine.” Wow! If Jesus offers Himself in the Eucharist to even our enemies, they must still be loved by God and have dignity. Now, if they're in a state of mortal sin, by committing abuse, then they shouldn't receive Jesus until they go to Confession, but the point is: Jesus still offers Himself to them. “If our Eucharistic worship is authentic, it must make us grow in awareness of the dignity of each person,” especially our enemies.

There are two things we need to have in order to love our enemies: 1) The right understanding of forgiveness, which Jesus has just given us; 2) The grace to love like Jesus. [...]

And we should go to Confession, confessing our unforgiveness, because we need to be purified of our own sins, and once we encounter the Father's mercy to ourselves, it'll be easier to pass it on to others (Cf. CCC 1458).

A spiritual director once gave me good advice when I felt angry with some people in my life years after they hurt me. She said to imagine myself with Jesus on the cross, and ask Him for the grace to love them like He does, and not to leave my

prayer until I felt the same love as He does. This prayer gave so much grace: That's when I was able to let go of my ill-will towards them. That's how we love: Looking at people the way Jesus does, and getting strength from Him!

Two final stories: One of my seminary professors once told us about a woman whose husband committed adultery. She went for counselling, shared her story and pain, but the healing only started when the doctor lovingly asked her, “Are you going to stay angry forever?”

Second, a priest once told a group of seminarians that every time we refuse to forgive, we're the ones who hurt ourselves. Whatever harm people did to us is in the past, but every time we refuse to forgive, we hurt ourselves again. So, I realized: He's right! I keep on bringing these old hurts up, living in the past, and choosing not to let go—No! I want to be free. That motivated me to face the pain and, with God's grace, choose to forgive people, and then I was free and the hurts slowly faded away!

God desires our good, and so we should desire the good even of our enemies.

- Excerpt from Fr. Justin's homily, February 24, 2019

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