

CGS FAMILY

FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT

Volume II, Guide Number 18, March 27, 2022



**Why is forgiveness essential to the
Christian life and how does
forgiving and being forgiven bring
me closer to Jesus Christ?**

www.cgscclchurch.com

Welcome



**HELLO,
CHRIST THE GOOD SHEPHERD FAMILY!**

Welcome to our weekly CGS Guide that helps our parish families to grow in knowledge of the faith and deepen our relationship with Jesus as his disciples. As we encounter Jesus, we come to know him, love him, and serve him so that we can be reasonably happy in this life and happy with him forever in heaven.



This Week

An Ultimate Love Story


Today's gospel is one of the most beloved stories of all time, commonly known as "The Prodigal Son." Jesus dramatically illustrates a torrid story of a son gone astray and a father's relentless pursuit. We are moved by the father's lavish treatment of a young man who had certainly done nothing to earn it or deserve it. No one would blame such a father if he were to say, "That worthless son of mine; how dare he do this to me!" Yet his concern is not for how he was wronged but what he could do to help make it right.

It has been said that "He who cannot forgive others, destroys the bridge over which he himself must cross." While it is in the nature of God the Father to forgive; for us, forgiving the deepest hurts requires considerable effort and quite literally a Power beyond our own. Perhaps this story has so captivated us because we ourselves long to be forgiven in this way. Jesus came to make things right, and he tells us that such radical forgiveness it is not only possible, but necessary for us to enter into eternal life. May this inspiring love story help us to write our own ultimate love story within our lives.

Ivana T. Meshell

For questions, comments, and feedback, please contact us at

DISCIPLESHIP@CGSCC.CHURCH



The Holy Mass

The liturgy is the summit toward which the activity of the Church is directed, at the same time, it is the font from which all her power flows. (Cf. SC #10)

Why go to Mass?

Christ the Good Shepherd Mass Schedule

Find Mass Anywhere

This season, we are exploring the Big Idea

How do we get to know and love Jesus Christ?

Fourth Sunday of Lent readings and podcasts (Year C).

from the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB).

First Reading: Joshua 5:9a, 10-12

Psalms 34:2-3, 4-5, 6-7.

Second Reading: II Corinthians 5:17-21

Gospel: Luke 15:1-3, 11-32

Note: Year A Readings are used on this Sunday when we have catechumens (unbaptized persons) dismissed from the Sunday Mass, which is not happening at our parish this year.

Additional options for studying and discussing the Word of God:

Opening the Word by FORMED (this week's episode is audio only)

Sunday Connection by Loyola Press

Reflecting on the Sunday Readings

Children's Liturgy of the Word by CatholicTV.org

WE LEARN & BECOME DISCIPLES TOGETHER

Question of the Week

Why is forgiveness essential to the Christian life and how does forgiving and being forgiven bring me closer to Jesus Christ?

Opening Prayer

CONNECT with our GOD

- Let's start with the The Sign of Cross.
- In your own words, ask the Holy Spirit to be present as we gather so share our faith (Prayer to the Holy Spirit).
- Listen to the Lord speaking to you as someone reads out loud the Gospel for this Sunday (see previous page for links to Scripture readings for this week).
- Listen to each other as everyone shares what in the Gospel caught their attention.
- Pray the "Glory be..."

More on how to manage a group discussion.

Step One

CONNECT with our daily LIVES

In today's gospel, the younger son is lost. If you think about it, the older son is also lost. How does the father love each son in the way that is best for each son? Explain.

Getting
Started

How to use
this Guide.

Why are we
doing this?

Step Two

CONNECT with Scripture and Tradition

As a domestic church (your household) or Small Faith Group, pray and read through some of the following (you can select) Scriptures & Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC) references as time permits.

In the HOLY SCRIPTURE we read:

- "'Repent and be baptized...in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins.'" Acts 2:38
- We should bear with one another through love. Ephesians 4:32
- When we pray for forgiveness, we must also be willing to forgive. Luke 17: and Matthew 6:9-12.

In the Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC), we read:

- We should be generous and tireless in forgiving one another. CCC #2227
- The family is the school for learning to forgive and be forgiven. 1657, 2227
- Forgiveness must be given to whoever trespasses against us: 2840, 2845

Discussion Questions

Choose from among these according to the needs and interests of your group.

1. The story in today's gospel, known as "The Prodigal Son" has throughout the centuries been one of the most treasured and memorable stories in the bible. Why do you think that is true?
2. Jesus forgives us and asks us to forgive each other. What does that mean to you?
3. It can be very hard to forgive someone who has hurt you very much. Thinking of the teaching of Jesus, what could you do to become more forgiving when forgiveness is difficult?
4. In what ways could you practice compassion and forgiveness toward others each day?

Want more? Go Deeper

Reflection Questions

1. Who in my life needs forgiveness from me? How could you begin to forgive that person?
2. Who in my life do I need to ask forgiveness from? How could I begin that conversation?
3. Am I ready to meet Jesus in the sacrament of reconciliation?

Parish Penance Service: Tuesday, March 29, 2022 // St. Prince of Peace Parish starting 6:00pm

RESOURCES FOR ALL AGES

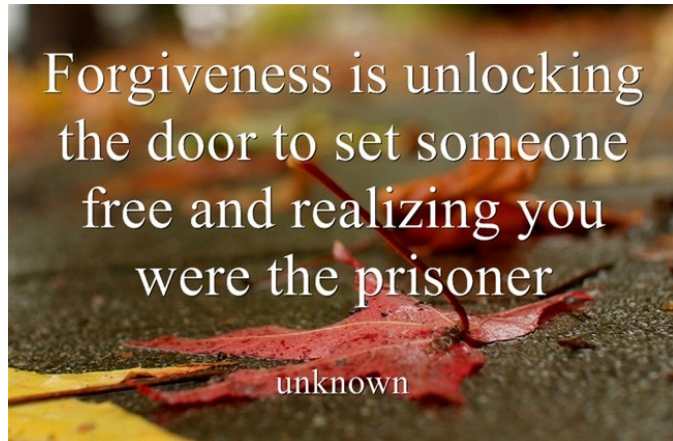
For related information, activities, and age-appropriate resources, turn to the *Resources for All Ages* section of this Guide. You may use as many or as few as you want to. Adapt to your situation and your household. You can even spread these activities over the span of the entire week. There is no wrong way to do this!

Step Three

CONNECT with OTHERS...

Living the Gospel with commitment & action.

What is one thing you are willing to change in your life so that you may forgive as Christ has forgiven you?



PRACTICAL ACTIVITIES

For the Individual

Forgive and be forgiven

This week, seek forgiveness for yourself or offer forgiveness to someone. Tell someone that you forgive him or her and why. Ask for forgiveness from someone. Admit your wrongdoing. It is nothing to be ashamed of to admit when you are wrong; instead, it is a shameful thing not to!

For Couples

Assume good will

Find ways to be more forgiving and patient with one another this week. Assume good will from your spouse. If deeper problems are preventing that, seek help.

For the Domestic Church

What are you grateful for? What are you sorry for?

Many families have taken up the admirable habit of going around the table to say what each person is grateful for. Next time, add: "What are you sorry for?" See how that changes your lives!

Missionary Mindset

Be a Peacemaker

Individual forgiveness contributes to a more peaceful and just world because peace does not mean lack of disagreement, but patiently bearing with one another's weaknesses. Everyone you meet is going through something hard. Practice simple kindness and consideration to strangers. Let others go first. Resist the urge to judge. Have a generally patient and forgiving attitude toward others. Pray for those who mistreat you. Be a peacemaker. **Watch this video with at least one other person. The end will surprise you.**

Closing Prayer

- We sign ourselves with the Sign of Cross.
- According to what we reflected on, or whatever is in my heart share a petition, at the end we all say: **Lord hear our prayer.**
- Then we can pray the Our Father, Hail Mary and the Glory be...
- As we finish, let us share a sign of peace with each other.

Psalm 51--The Miserere:

Prayer of Repentance

Have mercy on me, God, in accord with your merciful love;

in your abundant compassion blot out my transgressions.

Thoroughly wash away my guilt;

and from my sin cleanse me.

for I know my transgressions;

my sin is always before me.

Against you, you alone have I sinned;

I have done what is evil in your eyes

So that you are just in your word,

and without reproach in your judgment.

Behold, I was born in guilt,

in sin my mother conceived me.

Behold, you desire true sincerity;

and secretly you teach me wisdom.

...continued.



AT THE END OF THE LESSON OR END OF THE WEEK

From what you have learned, how would you now answer the Question of the Week?

Why is forgiveness essential to the Christian life and how does forgiving and being forgiven bring me closer to Jesus Christ?

RESOURCES FOR ALL AGES

POINTS OF UNDERSTANDING

Clear statements of the Church's teachings.
Where they come from and ways to use them.

1. Age-Specific Resources

Early Childhood (Ages 3-5)

"Seeds" by Pflaum Publishing.

Little Baby Bum // Please, Thank You, Sorry Song--video (1:10) Another version (2:00)

Loyola Press // Praying with Children: Blessings and Family Prayers--article.

PBS Kids | Saying I'm Sorry is the First Step (Song), video - 1:27

Childhood (Elementary, Grades 1-5)

Grades K-1: "**Promise**" by Pflaum Publishing and

Grades 2,3 &4: "**Good News**" by Pflaum Publishing.

FORMED// You Are Forgiven: Episode 1 - Signs of Grace: You Are Forgiven, video- 3:26

Group Publishing // You Forgive Me, video - 2:47

HELPFUL TIPS!

Create a prayer table or space.
Faith Groups at CGS

Early Adolescence (Jr.High, Grades 6-8)

Question: When I have failed my parents or a friend how hard for me is to ask for forgiveness and why?

Grades 5 & 6: "**Venture**" and Grades 7 & 8: "**Visions**" by Pflaum Publishing.

Ascension Presents // The Price of Forgiveness -- Video (5:34)

LifeTeen // Hatred and Forgiveness -- Blog

Shannon Ritter // Signs of Forgiveness, video (2:07)

Adolescence (High School, Grades 9-12)

Question: When I have failed my parents or a friend how hard for me is to ask for forgiveness and why?

Ascension Presents // Forgiveness --Video (4:42)

Ascension Presents // What Forgiveness is Not--Video (8:01)

Shannon Ritter // Signs of Forgiveness, video (2:07)



Age-specific materials for early childhood through 8th grade are now available for your use together with this Guide. They are easy to use and the cost is \$25.00 per set, per year. Reserve and pick up your copies by contacting Jackie Coba in the parish office or by email. 346.236.6459 ex. 342 or jcoba@cgsgc.church
Want samples? Need help? Just ask! Learn more at the Gospel Weeklies Website for Parents!

Adulthood

Robyn McLeod of Chatsworth Consulting Group // [Please, Thank You, I am Sorry: Words for Kindergarten and Leadership](#)

Ascension Press // ["Forgive and Forget": Is It Really Possible?](#) - YouTube -video -6:38

The Catholic Stand // [The Importance of Forgiveness - Catholic Stand](#) - blog.

James V. Schall, S.J // [On Forgiveness \(The Catholic Thing\)](#), article
Bishop Robert Barron // [On Anger and Forgiveness](#), video- 6:62



2. General Resources

The Holy Bible

[Online Bible via the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops \(USCCB\)](#)

If you don't know much about the Bible or want to learn more: [Scripture Support](#)

Catholics use the **New American Bible Revised Edition** (NABRE) as the translation for Mass readings. There are many acceptable versions of NABRE ([learn more](#)) as well as [other approved translations](#). You may purchase from any vendor and we do have some basic editions on hand at the parish office at no charge—available upon request.



Recommended Print Bibles

These are all by St. Mary's Press: Order directly from the publisher or search online for other vendors.

[Catholic Family Connections Bible](#)
([digital version available](#)).

[Catholic Youth Bible](#) (Adolescents & College)
["Breakthrough"](#) (Early Adolescents // Jr. High)
[Catholic Children's Bible](#)

The Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC)

[Online Catechism](#) via the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB)

NEW! [Simplified version of the Catechism of the Catholic Church](#)

If you don't know much about the Catechism or want to learn more: [Catechism Support](#)

Formed

Our parish subscribes to a library of online resources called Formed. It is excellent and it is free for you to use. Register at www.formed.org - Need help? Watch this video.

Prayers and Praying

Loyola Press // [A Parent's Prayer](#)--article.

Loyola Press // [Creating a Space for Silence](#)--article.

Common Prayers and Formulas to Learn by Heart

[Familiar prayers](#) and a [chart showing at what age level they should be learned](#).

Counseling, Grief Support & Spiritual Direction

- Our parish offers [Rejoice Counseling](#) for individuals and families for a variety of issues and needs. You may use this [online form](#) to contact them directly.
- We also offer [Grief Support](#) ministry for those who have lost loved ones and [Spiritual Direction](#) for anyone interested. Follow the links or inquire through the parish office.

Music to Move You

The Chaplet of Divine Mercy in Song

Songs of Comfort // [8 Catholic Church Songs and Christian](#)

[Hymns of Faith](#) | Catholic Choir with Lyrics.

Matthew West//[Forgiveness](#) – Matthew West, video – 4:27

Sanctus Real// [Forgiven](#), video – 3:36

Sacred Art to Inspire You!

All Sacred Art Currently on Formed (parish subscription free to our parishioners--register once, get access to all content) All Sacred Art – FORMED

Wayne Pascall // [The Prodigal Son](#), fine art.

Joel Huffstetler // [The Prodigal Son](#), fine art.

Rembrandt // [The Return of the Prodigal Son](#), circa 1667, painting.



3. Sacramental Resources

The [sacraments section of our website](#) is completely updated.

Go to the sacraments page of our website and browse for the most current information. Here you will find everything you need to get started with any sacrament. Additional information is being added and continually updated. Questions may be directed to Selma DeMarco, Associate Director of Sacraments and Discipleship.

WE ARE THE CHURCH

What Makes us Catholic?

We Don't Believe in "Cheap Grace"

The term "cheap grace" can be traced back to a book written by German theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer published in 1937 called *The Cost of Discipleship*. In his book, Bonhoeffer defined "cheap grace" as "the preaching of forgiveness without requiring repentance, baptism without church discipline; Communion without confession. Cheap grace is grace without discipleship, grace without the cross, grace without Jesus Christ." Notice what is emphasized in Bonhoeffer's definition of "cheap grace." It is on the benefits of Christianity without the costs involved; hence, the adjective "cheap" to describe it. Catholics share Bonhoeffer's belief that grace is free gift from God--freely given--though for it to be effective we must be willing to turn from sin and become followers Jesus.



HOW HAVE YOU SEEN GOD PRESENT AND ACTIVE IN YOUR LIFE THIS WEEK?

Word of the Week - Mercy

The word 'mercy' comes from the Latin misericordia, which comes from the two words miseria, meaning wretchedness, misery or affliction, and cor, meaning heart. Etymologically "mercy" means a heart for the misery or affliction of another; it means compassion or pity. "Mercy includes showing kindness to those who don't deserve it and forgiving those that deserve punishment." Mercy is one of the defining characteristics of God. Exodus 34:6 says: "The Lord, the Lord, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness."

Saints of the Month

Book Suggestions

More for your Domestic Church

A Domestic Church is your household of believers in Jesus Christ. View a short video on what is the Domestic Church. See also this reference in the Catechism of the Catholic Church: CCC 1655-1858 and our Glossary of Terms. There is so much at CGS for your Domestic Church! See our website, social media pages, YouTube, and this week "**FLOCKNOTE**" for all things CGS!

"Faith Groups" on our Website

Find resources for your family, including how to use this Guide, family traditions from other parishioners, FAQs, how to use the Points of Understanding, a Glossary of Terms and more. Visit cgscdodgh.org/faith-groups OR scan the QR code on the right with your smart phone.

Join a small Faith Group in our parish. Contact discipleship@cgscchurch.org





Our Mission as a Roman Catholic Community is to proclaim the teachings of Jesus Christ as declared in the scriptures and shown in the sacred tradition of the church. We are empowered by the Holy Spirit to know, love, and serve God and our neighbors.

WE WANT OUR PARISHIONERS TO CONTRIBUTE TO THIS GUIDE!

How is this Guide working for you and your family?

Show us what your family is doing with these Guides!

Share an idea, a resource or picture/video of what you are doing in your Domestic Church.

DISCIPLESHIP@CGSCC.CHURCH
BECOMING OUR "BEST PARISH EVER!"



Text CGS to 84576 to join us on Flocknote
You will receive emails & texts from CGS



CHRIST THE GOOD SHEPHERD CATHOLIC COMMUNITY



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Very Reverend James Burkart, Pastor

The contents of this Guide are in accordance with the teachings of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops and the Curriculum Framework for Lifelong Faith Formation of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston under the pastoral care of Daniel Cardinal DiNardo, Archbishop.