

*Forgiving and letting go is not easy, especially when the wound is very deep. This is why I call forgiveness the 'F' word, because it's not to be used lightly. Forgiveness is a choice and often involves a three stage process: (1) I will never forgive that person (2) I can't forgive (forgiveness seen as a good thing, but the hurt is too great) (3) I want to forgive and let go with God's help.*

**GLORIA:**

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to people of good will. We praise you, we bless you, we adore you, we glorify you, we give you thanks for your great glory, Lord God, heavenly King, O God, almighty Father.

Lord Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son, Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us; you take away the sins of the world, receive our prayer; you are seated at the right hand of the Father, have mercy on us.

For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

**The Creed:**

I believe in one God, the

Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible. I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages. God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father; through him all things were made. For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven, and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate, he suffered death and was buried, and rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church. I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

**1st Reading: Sirach 27:30-28:7**

Our desire for revenge can block us from receiving God's mercy. Anger and wrath, these also are abominations, yet a sinner holds on to them. The vengeful will face the Lord's vengeance, for he keeps a strict account of their sins. Forgive your neighbour the wrong he has done, and then your sins will be pardoned when you pray. Does anyone harbour anger against another and expect healing from the Lord? If

one has no mercy toward another like himself, can he then seek pardon for his own sins? If a mere mortal harbours wrath, who will make an atoning sacrifice for his sins? Remember the end of your life, and set enmity aside; remember corruption and death, and be true to the commandments. Remember the commandments, and do not be angry with your neighbour; remember the covenant of the Most High, and overlook faults.

**Responsorial: Psalm 102:1-4, 9-12**

R./: The Lord is kind and merciful; slow to anger and rich in compassion.  
My soul, give thanks to the Lord, all my being, bless his holy name.  
My soul, give thanks to the Lord and never forget all his blessings. (R./)  
It is he who forgives all your guilt, who heals every one of your ills, who redeems your life from the grave, who crowns you with love and compassion. (R./)  
His wrath will come to an end; he will not be angry for ever. He does not treat us according to our sins nor repay us according to our faults. (R./)  
For as the heavens are high above the earth so strong is his love for those who fear him.  
As far as the east is from the west so far does he remove our sins. (R./)

**2nd Reading: Romans 14:7-9**

As we belong to Christ, we live to the Lord. We do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord; so then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. For to this end Christ died and lived again, so that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living.  
**Gospel: Matthew 18:21-35**  
The spirit of the unforgiving debtor rebounds on himself. Peter came and said to Jesus, "Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often

should I forgive? As many as seven times?" Jesus said to him, "Not seven times, but I tell you, seventy-seven times."

"For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him; and, as he could not pay, is lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions, and payment to be made. So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.' And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii; and seizing him by the throat, he said, 'Pay what you owe.' Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you.' But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt. When his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. Then his lord summoned him and said to him, 'You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as had mercy on you?' And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt. So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart."

*-wishing you and your loved ones a very lovely Sunday.*

**Fr. Gregory Umunna**

**ST. STEPHEN'S R C CHURCH BLAIRGOWRIE**

⇒ St. Mary's Coupar Angus

⇒ St. Luan's Alyth

**24th Sunday of the Ordinary Time. Year A. 13/9/20**

**Parish website:** <https://www.st-stephens-blairgowrie.org.uk/>



**Warm Welcome to all our Parishioners and visitors .**

**Whether you are visiting our parish or just moved into the area, please feel very welcome ... thanks.**

**Parish diary for the Week:**

**Sunday Masses:** St. Steph. Vigil: 6.30pm, 9.30am, 11.00am.

**Mon:**

**Tue -** Mass at St. Steph 10.00am. **Our Lady of Sorrows**

**Wed -** Mass at St. Steph 7.00pm. **St. Ninians**

**- Baptismal Session for parents planning to be baptize their babies in the coming months. 7.30pm**

**Thurs -** Mass at St. Luan's 10.00am;

**Frid -** Mass at St. Luan's 10.00am.

**Sund -** St. Steph. Vigil: 6.30pm, 9.30am, 11.00am.

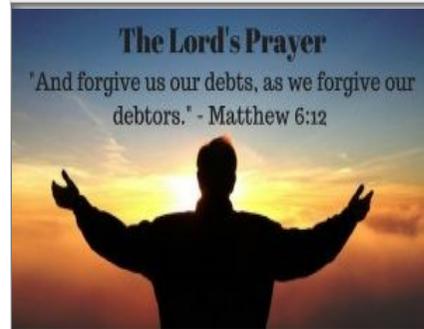
**Mass intentions for the week**

⇒ For all who are struggling to cope with the pandemic.

⇒ For those who find it difficult to forgive

*Does anyone harbour anger against another and expect healing from the Lord? If one has no mercy toward another like himself, can he then seek pardon for his own sins? ...*

*So ... if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart, how can you hope to be forgiven."*



**Fam. Rosary, adoration.**

Wednesdays 6pm, and mass for the sick last Wednesdays of the month.

**Mass with St. Step P. Sch.**

1st Fri & 3rd Fri. of the month; end of terms and core events masses.

**Sacrament of Reconciliation:**

6.00pm every Saturday and 9am every Sunday.

**Divine Mercy Devotion.**

Tuesday after morning mass. Please join us.

**Parish Priest:** Fr. Gregory Umunna MA, Ph.D.

**Phone:** 01250872171. **Email:** peacegreg2002@yahoo.com.

**Address:** 8, Bank Street, Blairgowrie, PH10 6DE.

**H/Teacher:** St. Steph's P. S. Mr. Simon Mckell. Ph: 871950.

**Parish Volunteers:** **Catechists:** Linda Forsyth

Catechism Classes for 1st Holy Communion and Confirmation every Monday 6.00pm in the Hall.

**Parish Safeguarding Coordinator:** Mrs. Linda Forsyth.

Email: lady.linda@live.co.uk 01828632024.

**Parish Webmaster:** Mr. Irek Kawalinski. irekkowalinski@gmail.com

**Music Directors:** Mr. Tom Buckham and Mrs. Gail McIntyre.

**Responsible Person for Euch. Ministers:** Mr. Alan Scott

**Responsible Person for Lectors:** Mr. John Thompson

**Responsible Group- Parish Social Justice issues:** SSSVP.

**Financial Adviser:** Mr. Mike Coyle.

**Responsible Person for Altar Servers:** Mr. Rolly Colanse.

**Hall Reservations for Events:** Contact no: 872171.

**Hospital Chaplains:** Please call: N/wells 01382611282;

**P.R.I.:** 01738259371. \*Please let the priest know if you are having a long stay at the hospital and would like a visit .

**Baptisms, Weddings and Funerals:** Please make appointment with the Priest before any arrangement and date.

**Parish Website:** [www.st-stephens-blairgowrie.org.uk](http://www.st-stephens-blairgowrie.org.uk)

**Diocese of Dunkeld Scottish Charity No:**

**Prayers please:** Please remember the following in your prayers:=== Janet Melville, James Warden, Michael Rolls, Ron Crisp, Eilidh MacInnes, LieseLotte Stuart, Neil McDowall Michael O'Malley.

**Have you prayed your Rosary today?**



### Parish Finances

We know that the present difficult situation affects individuals and households in many ways. However, if you feel able to support the parish in whatever way you could, (direct debit, occasional or one-off), is an account number:

**Bank: Royal Bank of Scotland, 14 Allan Street, Blairgowrie, PH10 6AD**

**Sort code:- 83-1633**

**Account No:- 00240708**

**Account name:- Trustees of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Dunkeld No3 Char TST St Stephens RC Church**

Many thanks for supporting your parish.

### Reflections: Forgiveness Liberates and Heals

Today is the twenty fourth Sunday of ordinary time. Last week, the church reminded us of the importance of reconciliation through fraternal dialogue and mutual love. Today she, invites us to reflect on forgiveness. It is a very important element of reconciliation, and our Christian belief. It is the central message of today's first and gospel readings.

There is a popular saying that to err is human, while to forgive is divine. That is to say, that the one who sins acts humanly. This is because, it is part of our attributes as humans to err or to sin. On the other hand, the one who forgives acts divinely. This is because, to

forgive is to participate in a very important attribute and nature of God. That is, His divinity. It is what our God is known for. 'He is compassionate, merciful, love and He forgives' (Ps 102).

The first reading of today focuses on forgiveness. First, it reminds us that for our prayer to be answered, we must forgive others. Second, it presupposes that we are all sinners, in need of God's forgiveness. So, for us to be forgiven, first, we must forgive others. Therefore, Sirac urges us: 'Forgive your neighbour hurt he does to you, and when you pray, your sins will be forgiven.' This is a call to liberate others, in order to liberate and heal ourselves too.

In the second reading, Paul reminds us of something very important. 'The life and death of each of us has its influence on the other.' Also, our ability to forgive has a great influence on the other, as well as, on ourselves. Hence, it is important to note that, forgiveness has a double effect. It is a single dose medicine that cures one or many persons at the same time. It liberates the one who is forgiven, as well as, heals the one who forgives.

In the gospel, Christ takes forgiveness to a different and practical level. This unfolds in the dialogue between Peter and Christ. Peter asked a theoretical question: 'How many times must I forgive my brother?' Jesus answered him in the most practical way: 'seventy-seven times.' Christ's response simply reminds us that Christian forgiveness does not have limits. We must forgive all, always and forever as the prayer of Sant Francisco of Assis says: 'Wherever there is injury (offence or hurt), forgiveness.'

Jesus tells us to forgive all, and forever. What does it mean to forgive all and forever? First, it does not mean: 'I forgive you, but we

must go our separate ways,' or 'I forgive you, but I do not want to see you again in my life,' or 'I forgive you, but I will not forget.' It means something much deeper. It means to restore unity, to believe that it is possible to walk together towards a common goal. It means to heal a wound, without leaving a scar.

It is important to add that, sometimes, one equally needs to forgive oneself for the faults committed against self. Endless grieving or guilt conscience because of one's mistakes in life, reduces one's quality of life. It hinders both spiritual and material progress. So, we must forgive ourselves too, in order to continue living in peace with ourselves.

**—reflection by Fr Njoku Canice Chukwuemeka, CSSp**

### Personal Reflections

- ⇒ Do I feel nourished after holy communion? Do I feel a sense of relief that Mass is over?
- ⇒ Has the Mass strengthened our identity as a community?
- ⇒ Do I take away a message, thought or prayer for the week?



### Foods 4 Thought:

### CONGREGATION FOR THE CLERGY

Contd from last week ....

14. Beginning with a consideration of the signs of the times, it is necessary, in listening to the Spirit, to produce new signs. With the Parish no longer being the primary gathering and social centre, as in former days, it is thus necessary to find new forms of accompaniment and closeness. A task of this kind ought not to be seen as a burden, but rather as a challenge to be embraced with enthusiasm.

15. Imitating their Master, the Lord's disciples, in the school of Saints and shepherds, learned, not without suffering, how to await the times and ways of God, thus nurturing the certainty that He is present until the end of time, and that the Holy Spirit – the beating heart in the life of the Church-gathers together the children of God dispersed throughout the world. As a result, the Christian community should not be afraid to begin and accompany processes within territories that are host to diverse cultures, in the sure and certain hope that, for the disciples of Christ, "nothing genuinely human fails to raise an echo in their hearts" [17].

IV. Mission: the guiding principle for renewal

16. Given the above-mentioned changing realities, their generous dedication notwithstanding, the current Parish model no longer adequately corresponds to the many expectations of the faithful, especially when one considers the multiplicity of community types in existence today [18]. It is true that a characteristic of the Parish is that its rootedness at the centre of where people live from day to day. However, the Parish territory is no longer a geographical space only, but also the context in which people express their lives in terms of relationships, reciprocal service and ancient traditions. It is in this "existential territory" where the challenges facing the Church in the midst of the community are played out. As a result, any pastoral action that is limited to the territory of the Parish is outdated, which is something the parishioners themselves observe when their Parish appears to be more interested in preserving a nostalgia of former times as opposed to looking to the future with courage [19]. It is worth noting, however, that from a canonical perspective, the territorial principle remains in force, when required by law [20].

To be continued...

### Still on Forgiveness... The Burden of refusing to forgiving

Refusing to forgive is refusing to love, and it is never acceptable to withhold forgiveness either.

God's forgiveness is always there, and so is God's love.

The relation between love and forgiveness also helps us see the difference between forgiving a wrongdoer and enabling him to continue in his wrongdoing. Love wants the good for the beloved. A person who forgives a sinner loves that sinner; and because she loves him, she has a heart for his good. A wife who continues to live with a husband who beats her isn't forgiving him. She's helping him to get worse. There is nothing loving or forgiving about enabling a person to get worse. For her to forgive her husband is for her to want his good, even in the face of his bad treatment of her. But his good requires, first of all, that he stop hurting her, and then that he repent his terrible treatment of her.

If he is unrepentant, if he rejects goodness and love, then she can want the good for him anyway. But her forgiveness of him will be like a gift that can't be given because he won't receive it. Then the best she can do for him is to keep a distance from him, so that he doesn't get worse by continuing to hurt her.

God's love is like this, too. God's forgiveness is always there, and so is God's love. Because God loves every person, God offers the good to everyone too, no matter what that person's sins may be. God does not keep a careful distance from us when we sin. What stands between us and God is only our own unwillingness to receive the gift God is offering.

If we will only not reject it, the gift of God's love and forgiveness will be given to us and received.