
8 Monday

MONDAY, 32nd WEEK of YEAR

Titus 1: 1 - 9

Ps 23: 1 - 6

Luke 17: 1 – 6

“Things that cause sin will inevitably occur”. It’s because we’re human beings who carry the weakness of our fallen nature, and can do wrong as well as good. What Jesus particularly condemned, in the gospel reading for today, was people who cause others to sin. But He went on to urge correction and forgiveness for those who repent of doing wrong, even if it’s a repeated wrongdoing.

Forgiveness can be a difficult thing not only to do but even to understand. The more someone is personally injured or hurt or sinned against, the harder it can be to be really forgiving. Or even, sometimes, to want to forgive. Jesus well understood how hard it can be for us to forgive ---- in the prayer He taught us, didn’t He put that most demanding and humbling request: “forgive us our sins *as we forgive* those....” ? In Luke’s gospel, the request of Jesus’ apostles for Him to “increase their faith” comes right after what He’d been saying about forgiveness. This, too, emphasizes that while to sin is human, forgiveness is a grace-ful thing, a divine gift.

While we may find it hard to forgive a great wrong or hurt, why is it sometimes hard also to forgive something much less serious and perhaps not even deliberate ? Maybe it was our own too quick judgment of others and their intentions, our own suspiciousness, that caused (imagined) offense. Misunderstandings do occur. Which of us is without fault, or without an occasional carelessness in speech or action which offends someone ? Even in small things, and in our ordinary daily relationships, don’t we need to keep saying “Lord have mercy on me, a sinner” ?