

Twenty-fourth Sunday | Year A

September 17, 2023 (Sir 27:30-28:7 | Romans 14:7-9 | Matthew 18:21-35)

Ben Sirah wisely advises us to hold no wrath or anger inside us, for they are hateful things and can harm us. Let us ask God for the grace to be able to forgive and to pray for others.

1/ Let us bless God, for he is kind and merciful, slow to anger, and rich in compassion. We pray that all peoples, together with Pope Francis, constantly give praise to God. Let us pray.

2/ Assuring the Romans that no one lives or dies for oneself, and that whether one lives or dies, one belongs to God, Paul reminds all of us of the resurrection of Jesus. For those who have no hope in the resurrection after death. We pray that they reflect on the true meaning of life in this world, namely that the living God is the ultimate purpose of all life. Let us pray.

3/ In last weekend's Gospel, Jesus urged his disciples to peacefully settle disputes with their siblings. In today's Gospel, Jesus asks them to forgive their brothers and sisters from their hearts. For those who live with vengeance and lack the power of love. We pray that they be reminded that healing begins with showing love and kindness to oneself. Let us pray.

4/ Forgiveness and reconciliation are never one-way or one-sided, but always two ways and mutual. In order to forgive others, we must learn to first forgive and let go our own self-pity and resentment. For our sisters and brothers who have departed from us. Today let us forgive whatever sins they offended against us, so that they in turn may also pardon and pray for us in God's heavenly kingdom. Today we remember **[at 4:30 PM]** Betty Hardesty and Marion Whelan; **[at 10:00 AM]** James and Virginia Wilkins, and Marion Whelan. Let us pray.

God of heaven and earth, the perfection of justice and mercy is found in your love, and all humankind is in need of your rule. Help us to find your love in each other, so that justice and mercy may thrive through our obedience to your law. We ask this through Christ our Lord.