

## Introduction

The Word of God today, invites us to look honestly at the way we respond when we have been hurt, offended or wronged by others. We are reminded that anger, resentment and the desire for revenge can imprison our hearts. Jesus teaches us that the forgiveness we have received from God must become the forgiveness we are willing to extend to others. As we begin this Eucharist, let us therefore ask for the grace to recognise our own need for mercy, and the humility to show that same mercy to those who have hurt us. May this celebration free our hearts from resentment and make us more faithful witnesses to the forgiving love of Christ.

**First Reading** : Sir 27:30 - 28:7  
**Responsorial Psalm** : Ps 103:1-2, 3-4, 9-10, 11-12  
**Second Reading** : Rom 14:7-9  
**Gospel** : Mt 18:21-35

## Prayers of the Faithful

**Celebrant:** Trusting in the mercy of God, who forgives our sins and calls us to forgive one another, we bring before Him our petitions with the confidence that He will hear and answer us.

**Response:** *Lord, hear our prayer.*

- For the Pope Leo, our Bishops, Priests and Religious: that, having received the Lord's abundant mercy, they may proclaim the Gospel of forgiveness and through their own witness, become instruments of reconciliation in a wounded world... we ask this in faith.
- For peoples and nations divided by hatred, violence and long-standing grievances: that the grace of forgiveness may break the cycle of revenge, open paths to reconciliation, and bring healing where relationships have been broken... we ask this in faith.
- For families and communities: that those who carry the pain of betrayal, hurt or resentment may find the strength to forgive, and that our homes and communities may become places where differences are healed through patience, understanding and mercy... we ask this in faith.
- For ourselves as disciples of Christ: that we may never forget how generously God has forgiven us, and may therefore learn to forgive others, not merely with our lips, but with hearts freed from bitterness and the desire for revenge... we ask this in faith.
- For our personal intentions and especially for those who haven't experienced God's mercy, healing and forgiveness, we pray in silence... *(long silent pause)* ... we ask this in faith.

**Celebrant:** Merciful Father, You have shown us a love greater than our sins and a mercy greater than our failures. Hear the prayers we have placed before You and make us instruments of Your peace and reconciliation. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.