



# The Sacrament of Reconciliation

## Preparation Booklet 4



## The Unforgiving Servant

(Matthew 18: 23-34)



**Narrator** Peter once asked Jesus: "Lord, if my brother keeps on sinning against me, how many times do I have to forgive him? Seven times?" But Jesus said:  
**Jesus** "No, not seven times, but seventy times seven."

**Narrator** Then Jesus went on to tell this story...  
"Once there was a King who spoke to one of his servants who owed him a lot of money. The servant was not able to pay the debt, so the king ordered him to be sold as a slave along with his wife and children. But the servant begged the King:

**Servant** "Be patient with me. I will pay you back."

**Narrator** The king felt sorry for him and let him go. Then the servant met one of his fellow servants who owed *him* just a few pounds. But he didn't have enough money to pay back the money. The servant had him thrown into jail.

The king heard about this, and said ...

**King** "You worthless slave! I forgave you. You should have had mercy on your fellow servant, just as I had mercy on you."

**Narrator** The King was very angry and sent the servant to jail.  
Jesus said ...

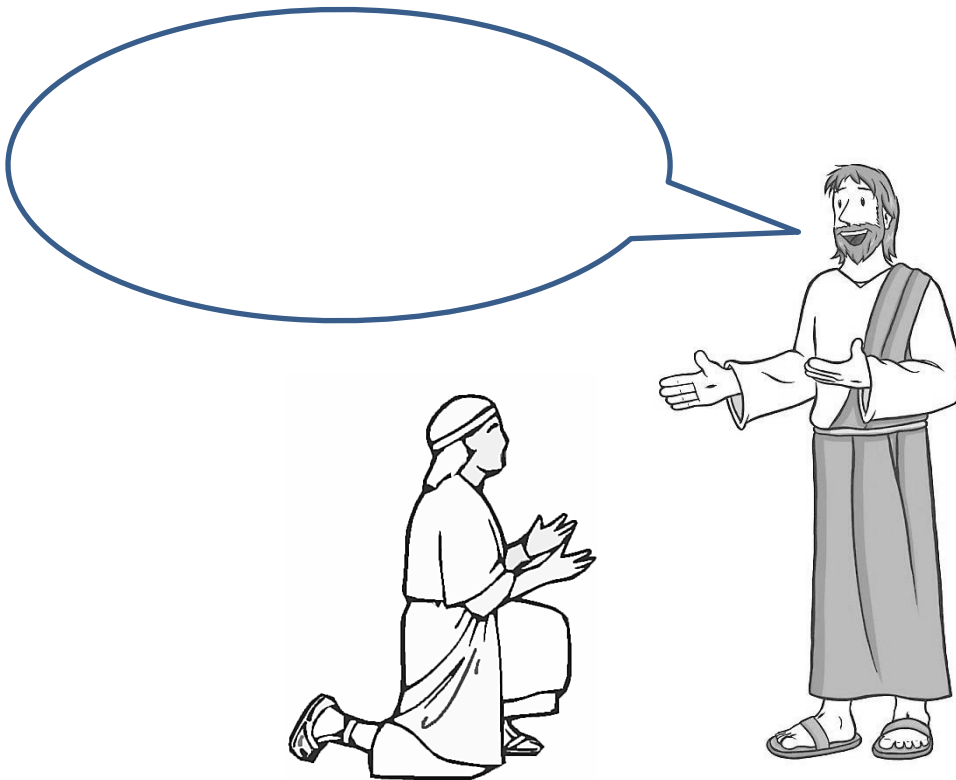
**Jesus** "That is how my father in heaven will treat every one of you unless you forgive your brother from your heart."

## Questions on the story

$$70 \times 7 = ?$$

- 1 What kind thing did the King do for his servant?
- 2 What unkind thing did the servant do to his fellow servant?
- 3 Why was the King angry?
- 4 What is "mercy"?
- 5 What do you think "**forgive from your heart**" means?
- 6 Why do you think Jesus says "Seventy times seven times"?

The slave was unkind to the servant and had him sent to jail.  
Jesus would not have done this.  
In the speech bubble, write down what you think Jesus would have said to the servant.



# Talking to Jesus



When we say the Our Father, we say these special words.

“Trespasses” are things that we do wrong.

Being unkind to someone, calling names or leaving someone out of a game in the playground are trespasses.

**When we make the Sacrament of Reconciliation, we do 3 things:**

- We think about our trespasses.
- We tell Jesus about our trespasses and say that we are sorry.
- We are forgiven and we try not to do these things again.

**Remember:** We can say sorry to Jesus anytime, not just during the Sacrament of Reconciliation. We can say sorry to Jesus when we pray.



At Reconciliation, we talk to Jesus in a special way through the priest who acts in the person of Jesus. The Church has the Sacrament of Reconciliation so that we can really feel and experience *God's* forgiveness.

The **Seal of Confession** is a promise that the priest will **NEVER** tell anyone what you say during Reconciliation. We should take part in the Sacrament of Reconciliation often and always during the Easter season.

## The Our Father

Our Father,  
who art in \_\_\_\_\_,  
hallowed be thy \_\_\_\_\_;  
thy kingdom come;  
thy will be \_\_\_\_\_  
on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily \_\_\_\_\_;  
and forgive us our trespasses  
as we \_\_\_\_\_ those who trespass against us;  
and lead us \_\_\_\_\_ into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.  
Amen.



Use the help words to fill in the missing words.

name      heaven      bread  
done      not      forgive

## The Sacrament of Reconciliation Booklet 4

### Aims of Lesson

#### The Unforgiving Servant worksheet

20 minutes approx.

Please note: There is a good modern-day version of the story of The Unforgiving servant on You Tube (duration 5 minutes) which could be used for a slightly older age group of children at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n-DI5dqLz5M>  
Similarly, there are many animated clips of the story on You Tube.  
These are all good for setting the scene at the start of a lesson.

Choose children to play the roles of Jesus, Narrator, Servant and King.  
For fun they could act the story out with actions - depending on the group.  
A few key words will need explained - "debt," "worthless," "servant," "slave," "mercy."

The aim of the story is to underline the servant's lack of mercy, even though he had been shown mercy by the King. We should treat others the way we would like to be treated ourselves. The final sentence of the story is important and could be linked to the Our Father "forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us."

"That is how my father in heaven will treat every one of you unless you forgive your brother from your heart."

Explain to the children that God wants us to be sorry for our sins and to have the intention not to commit the same sins again. This is not always possible but we should try our best.

You could emphasise to the children the importance of Jesus' commandment to "Love one another as I have loved you." (John 13 34-35).

#### Questions on the Story

15 minutes approx.

Ask each question and allow plenty of time for the children to give answers and discuss examples from their own lives. In the last question, try to get the children to understand that 70 X 7 means that they should keep on forgiving endlessly. You could multiply the sum for an answer to highlight just how many times we should forgive each other.

Then give the children time to think, in their own words, what Jesus would have said to the servant, e.g. "Don't worry, you don't have to pay me."

Or something as simple as: "It's ok."

### **Talking to Jesus worksheet**

**10 minutes approx.**

The aim of this sheet is to provide a link with the Our Father and emphasise the idea of forgiveness contained within it. It is a good time to explain the word "trespasses" as the children need to understand what they are saying every time they say this prayer. Explain the need to forgive if we are to be forgiven as well. Use the example of treating others the way we would like to be treated too.

The second half of this sheet explores why we go to Reconciliation as opposed to just saying sorry. Try to emphasise that Reconciliation is a meeting with Jesus and is personal and a holy moment; Jesus is present. Jesus himself conferred onto his apostles (and priests) the power to forgive sins on his behalf and thus Jesus has purposely given us this sacrament; it is a privilege.

When we sin, we break the bond of friendship between ourselves and God and between ourselves and other people. It is important that this is fixed again.

When we receive Holy Communion, we should not be in a state of grave or mortal sin. We need the Sacrament of Reconciliation to help us to receive the blessed Sacrament worthily.

This section mentions that the priest acts in the person of Jesus and that the seal of Confession is absolute. Remind the children that they can tell the priest anything and reassure them not to be afraid.

### **The Our Father worksheet.**

**15 minutes approx.**

A simple gap-filling task whose aim is to encourage them to learn the prayer by heart, and to understand the words of the prayer. Highlight that this prayer is partly about forgiving others and asking for forgiveness.

Spend a bit of time on the prayer.

- Ask for volunteers to say it aloud and read it together.
- You could extend the lesson by showing a clip of the prayer been said or sung on You Tube, or could ask the children to write it out on nice paper and laminate it for them to hang on their bedroom wall.