

## 7<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time

Dear Parishioners,

**“I say to you, love your enemies... pray for those who mistreat you”.**

This is not an easy command from our Lord. He tells us that we are to love our enemies, that we are to do good to those who hate us, that we are to bless those who curse us. No one of us could follow any of those commands on our own. If we are to love our enemies, God has to change us. God has to give us a new heart, a new way of seeing, a new way of loving.

That's why the most practical command that Jesus gives us in today's gospel is: “Pray for those who mistreat you.” Pray for your enemies. This may be hard to do but it is one of the healthiest things we can do. If we take that step, if we bring the person who has hurt us, before God in prayer, we open the possibility not only for God to change our enemy, but for God to change us.

So, we should bring the person that we cannot forgive before God in prayer and ask God to show us something, to give us some understanding that can move our heart closer to forgiveness. We should place the member of our family who has severely disappointed us and hurt us in God's presence and ask that God would give us a new way to love that person. We should take the friend who has betrayed us and spoke evil against us and before God ask that we might find a way to soften our judgement so that we might be merciful.

Prayer will most likely not change us overnight but if we commit to this kind of healing prayer every day, over time God will slowly change our hearts and free us of the burden of anger and hurt that may keep us from being merciful as He is merciful.

God bless you all!

Fr. Rolando