

## **Wednesday, 30 October 2019**

Lk 17:1-10

Fr. Mathew Maniampra CMI

The Word of God today reminds us of the need of specific dispositions and values in Christian life and ministries. The sum total of mission or missionary is to witness to the gospel truth by word and life. There needs to be some congruence in our lives.. Gospel tells often the need 'to be on guard.' This vigilance is needed, because our human ego does not want to bend at any time, unless we train it properly with values we envision. Forgiveness does not come that easily to anyone. Our natural tendency is 'tit for tat'. It seems that the main business of God is forgiving. It is your experience and my experience that God is far too forgiving to condemn us. We are called to reflect this truth in our human relationships and are asked to forgive countless times. With merciful love and forgiveness we become leavens in the dough; that is permeating the world with God's presence, a unique privilege and responsibility of the missionary and missionary church. Christianity is not a macho religion. Missionary people are called to show courage to forgive even in the midst of pain. . We should forgive before the sunset. St. Paul says, "Never let the sun set on your anger or else you will give the devil a foothold" (Eph. 4:26-27). "The freedom in a simple act of forgiveness saves the expense of anger and the high cost of hatred," remarks Wayne Dyer in his book *Wisdom of the Ages*. It relieves us from the burdens of resentment and past grievances and is just another word for simply "letting go."

It is easier to forgive those who offend us when we are loved and affirmed. Mother Teresa tells about a woman whom she found in the alleys of Calcutta. She was dying of hunger and disease. When Mother approached her she mumbled, "My son did this to me." Evidently, she did not think of her pain, sickness, and hunger. Her pain was from the sense of desertion and ingratitude from the dear son she loved. She received gentle and loving treatment from Mother Teresa. Before death she said, "I forgive my son." Love and forgiveness come easily to humans when they experience it first, either directly from God or through other humans. Forgiving does not mean that what happened does not matter, or that it is all right for someone to violate you. It simply means releasing the negative feelings you have about the events and the persons involved.

Sometimes people cling to negative events and relationships from the past. Refusing to let go of past events, whether positive or negative means throwing away part of our life and energy; this is a sure way of being handicapped. Since to forgive is more divine than human, with all our psychological effort this may not be accomplished. Like the mustard seed that is strong and firm in spite of all its tininess and not easily ruffled by what goes around, so shall be our faith in God's goodness to guard and reward us. Those who carry the mission of the church need this kind of unruffled faith especially at a time like now; you may be tiny but shall be undisturbed by the storm around, for the stronger One is at the helm. If your faith is of right quality, you don't need much of it: just a tiny amount would enable you to do the impossible as is said in the parable of the mustard in today's gospel. Things that are impossible in the natural realm are brought to pass because of faith. Many missionaries' life experience point out this truth eloquently.

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