



September 10, 2017 Twenty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time Lectionary: 127 Gospel MT 18:15-20

Jesus said to his disciples: "If your brother sins against you go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have won over your brother. If he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, so that 'every fact may be established on the testimony of two or three witnesses.' If he refuses to listen to them, tell the church. If he refuses to listen even to the church, then treat him as you would a Gentile or a tax collector. Amen, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Again, amen, I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything for which they are to pray, it shall be granted to them by my heavenly Father. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."

Spiritual Reflection: It is important to pay attention to the fine print in Jesus' teaching. He tells us today that if our brother or sister does not listen to our fraternal correction then we can treat them like a Gentile or tax collector, which at first sounds like a license to disown them and treat them harshly, but Jesus teaches us that we are to love (want what is best for another even if it requires a sacrifice on our part) our enemies (which includes Gentiles and tax collectors).

Spiritual Questions

1. How would you want to handle someone who has wronged you?
2. Why should you handle the situation the way Jesus wants you to instead of the way that you desire?
3. How can you show love to someone who has hurt you?
4. What steps can you take to move closer to forgiving someone who has hurt you deeply?
5. How does forgiveness, holding a grudge, and enabling interact in your life?