**FAITH 365 WEEK THREE 2020**

**A CALL TO FORGIVENESS**

**Preparation**

* **Have handouts ready for each participant**
* **Make sure CDs for music and video are ready**
* **Take time to make sure that all AV equipment is working before people arrive**
* **Place a candle in the center of the room/table**

**Welcome**

* **Invite people to be in the moment, put aside the cares of the day, and turn off cell phone**

**Focus**

* **This Lent all our sessions will focus on the idea of being called.**
* **Would anyone like to share from their experience this past week, if you had a chance to contact someone who stood with you in a time of challenge or difficulty?**

**What was it like to connect with that person again to share your gratitude? How did they respond?**

**Session Overview**

* Forgiveness is an important theme of the Lenten Season. This is the 8th year for Faith 365 in our parish, and in all those years, there is always a session on forgiveness.
* Forgiveness is a challenge and an opportunity. It is a challenge because it is hard, requires a willingness to let go, and a reliance on God’s grace to do what we cannot do. And many of us have learned how forgiveness is also an opportunity to see my life in a new way. It opens up new paths for answering the call to service.
* Each Lent, we are aware of our need for forgiveness: to receive and offer it. Every Lent will find us in a different situation or circumstance than the previous Lent. Today, we ask God to reveal a new understanding of forgiveness so that it can liberate us and others.
* **We will now use a song to settle us, open our hearts, and allow us to be present to this moment. This song is called Revelation. It is sung by the artist Troye Sivan**

**Song:** Revelation (Sivan/Jónsi) Sung by Troye Sivan

You're a revelation  
Won't you liberate me now  
From a holy bound  
You're a revolution  
I will liberate you now  
As the walls come down  
  
It's a rocky road to say  
Maybe I won't go  
Hey dear, you're a wrecking ball  
You're here crushing all I'm told  
Ever I roam  
Ever I roam  
Further from home  
Your hand I know

It's a revelation  
There's no hell in what I found  
No kingdom shell  
How the tides are changing  
As you liberate me now  
And the walls come down  
  
‘Til the end  
It's a rocky road to say  
Maybe I won't go  
Hey dear, you're a wrecking ball  
You're here crushing all I'm told  
Ever I roam  
Ever I roam  
Further from home  
Your hand I know  
Ever I roam  
Ever I roam  
Ever I roam

**Faith Sharing**

* **We will now listen to a passage from the Gospel of Matthew.**
* **Give out the sheet with the passage. Ask the members not to read along, but listen to the words and feel what is happening, or pay attention to the message it conveys.**
* **After the passage is read, we can be quiet for a minute or two so that all can look at the passage.**
* **Allow time for quiet, and then begin a conversation with these three questions:**
* **WHAT DID I HEAR?**
* **WHAT DO I THINK IT MEANS FOR US?**
* **WHAT CHALLENGE DID IT OFFER?**

**Intro to video**:

*Forgiveness (Orlando Bowen- NFL Player)*

Orlando Bowen was a linebacker in the Canadian Football League from 2000-2004. While waiting to meet two friends, two corrupt police officers beat him and falsely accused him of dealing drugs. This video is a story of grace, forgiveness and the call he has followed from that difficult time in his life.

* **Show video**

**Questions for Discussion**

* **Remember that all the questions do not have to be answered; nor do you have to discuss them in the order listed here. The questions are offered to help facilitate the conversation.**
* **Be conscious if individuals seem to dominate the conversation; gently suggest that others might want to weigh in.**
* **Remind the group that we want to speak about our personal experiences, and not relay the experience of other people.**
* **Every week, start with the question, What image or phrase stood out for you in the video? How people respond might direct which question you turn toward first.**

**REFLECTION QUESTIONS**

~What image or phrase was most impactful for you in the video?

~Orlando says that when we harbor hate in our hearts, we do more damage to ourselves that anyone else. Do you agree with him?

~Orlando challenges us to embrace forgiveness as a way of life. What does that look like?

~In the video clip, Orlando asks the following question, “What would you say, or how excited would you be, if you had everything you ever wanted, and one day, it was all gone?” How would you answer his question?

~Life is precious. How does forgiveness give us insight as to this concept?

~The event Orlando experienced gave him a perspective to serve. How are forgiveness and service to others related?

~In your opinion, is it harder to forgive someone else, or to forgive yourself?

~Forgiveness is a choice. Describe a time in your life when you chose to forgive someone. How did you make this choice?

~Orlando challenges us to forgive. Is there someone in your life who needs your forgiveness? Do you need to be forgiven by someone? Are you in need of forgiveness from yourself?

~Where have you been challenged to forgive?

~Why is forgiveness so hard? What holds us back from forgiving?

~How does forgiveness help us heal and move forward in our lives?

**Closing Prayer**

Each week, we will conclude our time together by offering intentions that we have. We can share those aloud or silently within our hearts.

Are there any intentions we would like to share at this time?

Allow time for group members to offer prayers.

Gathering all these prayers together, we pray together the Lord’s prayer…

**Our Father….**

**An invitation for the Week:**

Even if it has been many years since you have done it, make a plan to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation during this season of Lent.

**Song:** **Revelation** (Sivan/Jónsi) Sung by Troye Sivan

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Ever I roam Ever I roam; ever I roam  
Further from home Ever I roam.

**Scripture: Matthew 18:21-35**

Then Peter approaching asked him, “Lord, if my brother sins against me, how often must I forgive him? As many as seven times?”

 Jesus answered, “I say to you, not seven times but seventy-seven times. That is why the kingdom of heaven may be likened to a king who decided to settle accounts with his servants.

When he began the accounting, a debtor was brought before him who owed him a huge amount. Since he had no way of paying it back, his master ordered him to be sold, along with his wife, his children, and all his property, in payment of the debt. At that, the servant fell down, did him homage, and said, ‘Be patient with me, and I will pay you back in full. Moved with compassion the master of that servant let him go and forgave him the loan.

When that servant had left, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a much smaller amount.**[\*](http://usccb.org/bible/matthew/18" \l "48018028-1)** He seized him and started to choke him, demanding, ‘Pay back what you owe. Falling to his knees, his fellow servant begged him, ‘Be patient with me, and I will pay you back. But he refused. Instead, he had him put in prison until he paid back the debt.

Now when his fellow servants saw what had happened, they were deeply disturbed, and went to their master and reported the whole affair. His master summoned him and said to him, ‘You wicked servant! I forgave you your entire debt because you begged me to. Should you not have had pity on your fellow servant, as I had pity on you? Then in anger his master handed him over to the torturers until he should pay back the whole debt. So will my heavenly Father do to you, unless each of you forgives his brother from his heart.”