



*Serving the Spiritual Needs of Grieving Parents  
Whose Children of Any Age Have Died by Any Cause,  
No Matter How Long Ago*

**Your Emmaus Ministry  
Remote Retreat Guide  
August 8 , 2020  
9:30am EDT  
(or whenever is convenient for you)**

**FORGIVENESS**

***"Forgiveness is the greatest revenge."***



**Preparation:**

Ahead of time, we recommend you find a quiet place in your home where you can immerse yourself in this retreat. Have your child's Emmaus Memorial Candle (or other candle) available along with a lighter or matches.

Take several deep breaths to cleanse your thoughts and open yourself to wherever the Holy Spirit is calling you today several minutes before the retreat is scheduled to begin.

At 9:30am EDT open your email and join other fellow Emmaus Parent Companions in getting away from the rest of the world, at least for a time, to focus on God and on your precious child.

**CANDLE LIGHTING PRAYER** (Light your candle)

We begin... In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, Amen

Lord, you are the Light of the World. *Help us feel your presence in the lighting of this candle.*

Lord, you gave us the gift of our children. *Help us feel their presence in the lighting of this candle.*

Lord, you gave us the hope of eternal life. *Help us confirm that hope in the lighting of this candle.*

Lord, you gave us love. *Help us to know that, as much as we love our children, you love them even more.*

We ask you this through Christ, Our Lord

Amen.

**OPENING SONG: [Forgiveness](#)** by Matthew West  
*The prisoner it frees is really you.*

**PRAYER OF THOSE MAKING A RETREAT**

Loving Spirit of Wisdom,  
Guide my thoughts and my memories.

In the light of your love,  
May I see what is important for me to remember,  
What is important for me to hold to my heart,  
And what I need to simply let go of in peace.

I trust you to be my guide,  
Even when the path seems unclear to me.

We pray this in the name of Your Son, the Healer,  
Our Lord, Jesus Christ.  
Amen.

**SCRIPTURE READINGS**

**Luke 15: 11-32**

Then he said, "A man had two sons,

and the younger son said to his father, 'Father, give me the share of your estate that should come to me.' So the father divided the property between them.

After a few days, the younger son collected all his belongings and set off to a distant country where he squandered his inheritance on a life of dissipation.

When he had freely spent everything, a severe famine struck that country, and he found himself in dire need.

So he hired himself out to one of the local citizens who sent him to his farm to tend the swine.

And he longed to eat his fill of the pods on which the swine fed, but nobody gave him any.

Coming to his senses he thought, 'How many of my father's hired workers have more than enough food to eat, but here am I, dying from hunger.

I shall get up and go to my father and I shall say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you.

I no longer deserve to be called your son; treat me as you would treat one of your hired workers.'"

So he got up and went back to his father. While he was still a long way off, his father caught sight of him, and was filled with compassion. He ran to his son, embraced him and kissed him.

His son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you; I no longer deserve to be called your son.'

But his father ordered his servants, 'Quickly bring the finest robe and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet.

Take the fattened calf and slaughter it. Then let us celebrate with a feast, because this son of mine was dead, and has come to life again; he was lost, and has been found.' Then the celebration began.

Now the older son had been out in the field and, on his way back, as he neared the house, he heard the sound of music and dancing.

He called one of the servants and asked what this might mean.

The servant said to him, 'Your brother has returned and your father has slaughtered the fattened calf because he has him back safe and sound.'

He became angry, and when he refused to enter the house, his father came out and pleaded with him.

He said to his father in reply, 'Look, all these years I served you and not once did I disobey your orders; yet you never gave me even a young goat to feast on with my friends.

But when your son returns who swallowed up your property with prostitutes, for him you slaughter the fattened calf.'

He said to him, 'My son, you are here with me always; everything I have is yours.

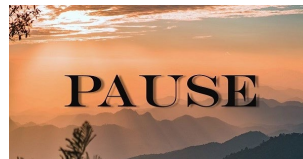
But now we must celebrate and rejoice, because your brother was dead and has come to life again; he was lost and has been found.'"

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

**REFLECTION #1: [Forgive and Forget...Is it Really Possible?](#)** by Jackie Angel

Only with the power of the Holy Spirit...



Take a moment to pause... breathe... savor what you have received from the Reflection #1.

Clear your mind before focusing on Reflection #2.

**REFLECTION #2: [Forgive and Be Set Free](#)** by Fr. Joe Kempf

*"To not forgive is like drinking rat poison and then waiting for the rat to die."*

### **PRAYER FOR THE GRACE OF FORGIVENESS**

Lord, I am a sinner who is in need of Your mercy.  
Help me to have a heart of true sorrow for my sins  
and to turn to You for that grace.

As I seek Your mercy,

help me to also forgive the sins  
that others have committed against me.

I do forgive.  
Help that forgiveness to enter  
deep into my whole being  
as an expression of  
Your holy and Divine Mercy.  
Help it to heal me.  
Help it to set me free.

Jesus, I trust in You.  
Amen

**CLOSING SONG:** [Psalm 103 Loving and Forgiving](#) by Scott Soper  
*Slow to anger. Rich in kindness.*

### **CLOSING BLESSING**

Let us end our time of retreat...united with Brother John Maganzini, OFM and the Franciscan Friars at Saint Anthony Shrine in Boston, MA, by blessing one another.

Raise your right hand and, together, let us pray...

#### **Loving God,**

May we have the grace to forgive our trespassers as you forgive them.

May we understand that they may not know what they did.

May we heal from their gross injustices and hurtful transgressions.

And may we relinquish our anger and bitterness to allow room for your peace to envelop us completely.

Grant this through Christ our Lord.

In the name of the Father, Your Son, and Holy Spirit,  
Amen.



#### **FOR FURTHER REFLECTION...**

- [The Top Ten Myths of Forgiveness](#)
- [What is Forgiveness?](#)
- [Forgiveness Might Not Erase the Pain, But It Sets You Free](#)



You will receive a new Emmaus Remote Retreat  
email next Friday.

Please join your fellow  
Emmaus Parent Companions  
again next Saturday at 9:30am EDT

Until then, may God bless you and keep you.  
Sending many warm, virtual hugs

For past Remote Retreats, see [here](#).

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#### REMINDER

We have concluded our  
Emmaus Ministry LIVE Virtual Gathering Series.  
If you were not able to join us for our Reflections  
--or would like to see them again--  
you can access these inspiring talks [here](#).



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