

LEARNING TO FORGIVE

GRADES 1-3 – Lesson 1

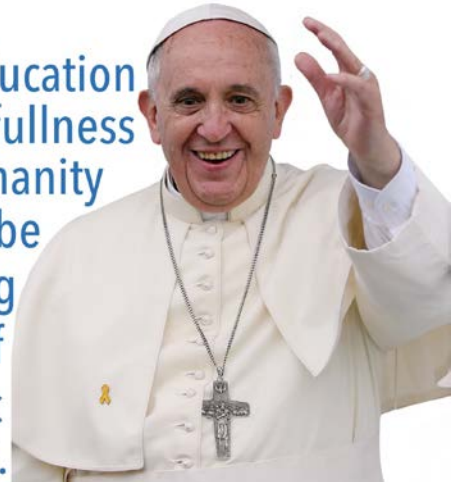
GOAL: Students will learn about the importance of offering forgiveness to their neighbors. Students will learn of God's forgiveness for all of them and how they are called to forgive others likewise. God is all-merciful and all-just, and here on earth, we try to imitate His mercy just as we saw Jesus do in the gospels. Everyone makes mistakes and that doesn't make them a bad person; through the parable of the Prodigal's Son, students will see how God embraces and welcomes those who have wronged Him and repented because He is forgiving.

Lesson:

Forgiveness and mercy are needed for everyone. Everyone makes bad choices, but our bad choices do not define us.

Students will learn about how God offers forgiveness and we are to offer forgiveness in our day-to-day lives when someone wrongs us. Some bad choices have smaller consequences and some have larger consequences.

“An education in the fullness of humanity should be the defining feature of Catholic schools.”



Bible Story:

Jesus taught us how to pray in the Bible when he first prayed the “**Our Father**”. When we say this prayer, we ask God to “forgive us as we forgive those who hurt us”. What does that mean?

Children may not all know what forgiveness is or what it is for. We can help them to understand that we are each in need of forgiveness when we do things that are wrong or hurt other people. When was a time you needed forgiveness?

Activity:

- Have children practice saying the Our Father. Say it slowly and help them understand words that may be new to them. Stop after each phrase to talk about it or answer questions.
- You can print and use the [“Our Father Printable for Kids”](#) that provides graphics for each phrase in the prayer.
- You can also have students [act out](#) the Our Father.

Watch and Discuss:

- Even though Jesus forgives us when we sin, sometimes we still have to suffer the consequences of our actions. Ask students to share a time when they have been punished for doing something wrong. Maybe they had a time-out or lost a privilege. Adults, too, have to face consequences for their actions.
- Watch [Nylo’s Story](#) to learn about a boy whose mom is in jail. He misses her but learns to write letters to her every day so they can be connected. What does this tell us about Nylo’s mom? Even though she is in jail, taking responsibility for something that she did that was wrong, she is still a good mom to Nylo and is teaching him and encouraging him. This reinforces the idea that our bad choices do not define who we are.
- For an additional video, watch [Murray talk with Nylo](#) about what it’s like to be separated from his mom.

Prayer:

Dear God,
Thank you for forgiving me when I do something wrong.
Please help me to forgive others.
Amen

Lesson adapted from the Archdiocese of Los Angeles Office of Life, Justice and Peace