

Mass Readings for Twenty-fourth Sunday September 17, 2023

1st Reading – Sirach 27:30-28:7

Anger and fury are both abominable, and the sinful man will be held by them. Whoever wishes for vengeance will find vengeance from the Lord, and he will surely be attentive to his sins. Forgive your neighbor, if he has harmed you, and then your sins will be forgiven you when you pray. A man holds on to anger against another man, and does he then seek a remedy from God? He has no mercy on a man like himself, and does he then entreat for his own sins? He who is but flesh holds on to anger, and does he then request forgiveness from God? Who can obtain pardon for his sins in this way? Remember your very end, and let animosities cease. For corruption and death are suspended over his commandments. Remember the fear of God, and do not be angry with your neighbor.

2nd Reading – Romans 14:7-9

Brothers and sisters:

None of us lives for himself, and none of us dies for himself. For if we live, we live for the Lord, and if we die, we die for the Lord. Therefore, whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord. For Christ died and rose again for this purpose: that he might be the ruler of both the dead and the living.

Gospel – Matthew 18:21-35

Peter approached Jesus and asked him, “Lord, if my brother sins against me, how often must I forgive? 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. 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 the fellow servant 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 your brother from your heart.”