



Helping People to Forgive the Church










The Breathing Prayer



Breathe in God's Love...
Breathe out...







Everyone knows people who have been hurt by someone or something in the Catholic Church.

Maybe they stopped going to Mass or switched to another faith.

Maybe they remained Catholic, but still struggle with anger, resentment or feelings of betrayal.





Hurts happen because the Church is made up of human beings. We may hold the Church to a higher ideal, but the reality is people in the Church sometimes make mistakes.





Think of someone you know who has been hurt by the Church...



How people get hurt...

Misunderstandings

Church rules

Change

Fatigue, stress or illness

Bad judgment

Mistakes

Hypocrisy

Sin



The Church: Human and Divine

There's an old saying that the Church is 99% human and only 1 % divine...

But the 1% is all that's needed for the Holy Spirit to work through human weakness.



A History of Hurts



- St. John Chrysostom (347-407)
- St. Francis of Assisi (1181-1226)
- St. Ignatius of Loyola (1491-1556)
- St. Joan of Arc (1412-1431)
- St. Bernadette Soubirous (1844-1879)
- Ven. Catherine McAuley (1778-1841)
- Ven. Catherine DeHueck Doherty (1896-1985)



"If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.

Mt. 16:24-25



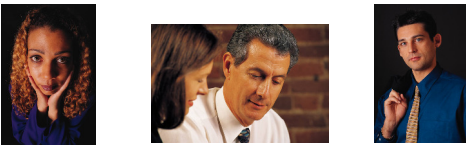




It's time for your questions, comments, concerns...



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Why it's important to Forgive



It puts an end to resentment, anger, bitterness and frustration.

It lets the poison drain out of the wound so healing can take place.

It restores your prayer life, your relationships, your thought processes, and your health.

In the Gospels, Jesus tells us to forgive.






Understanding Forgiveness


The will...

The intellect...

The emotions...




Choosing to Forgive



Begin by making a conscious choice to forgive.

Reflect on Jesus' Words: "Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you."

Ask Jesus to help you forgive.



The Process of Forgiving

Talk to a priest or go to confession and say, "I'm angry and hurt, and I want to let go of this."

Write down what happened. Bury or Burn the paper as a symbolic gesture of forgiveness.

Pray for the Church and the person you are forgiving.

Ask God's forgiveness for the way you've hurt others.

After you've made the decision to forgive...



If negative thoughts resurface, remind yourself that you've already forgiven. Then push the negative thoughts out of your mind.





Reaching out to People who have been hurt by the Church

- The entire parish
- Specific Groups
- Individuals



Helping Someone Else to Forgive



- Let them talk about it.
- Help put the incident into perspective.
- Try to resolve the problem.
- Encourage the person to stay connected. to the church and the sacraments.





“I am not made or unmade by the things that happen to me, only by my reaction to them. That is all God cares about ...” St. John of the Cross



St. Paul assures us “that in everything God works for good with those who love him”

(Romans 8:28)



It is only through forgiveness that the pain eventually subsides and a deep peace embraces the soul. This is the essence of spiritual healing. It is the peace the world cannot give. It is a gift of grace from a loving God.





It’s time for more questions, comments, concerns...