LESSON 19

Forgiveness and Peace

Learning Objectives

In this lesson you will:

- Realize words and actions are important, but we must also have a good attitude toward others.
- Explore Jesus' teaching about peace, nonviolence, and forgiveness.
- Grow in our desire to make peace with others, following the example of Jesus.

Opening Prayer

O Lord, help me to forgive others as you have forgiven me. Remove from my heart any bitterness that I feel towards others, for I want to love as you love. Amen.

Opening Activity

Scan the QR code to access the online resources.

FaithOfTheMountain.org/grade4/lesson19

Introduction

When we follow Jesus, we begin to think and to act like him. We begin to carry out the spiritual and corporal works of mercy, which he showed throughout the Gospels. One of the greatest ways we can follow Jesus is to forgive like he did. In this lesson, we will learn about the virtue of mercy. Mercy also helps us to forgive others when they hurt us. Mercy helps us make peace with these people again.

Reflection Questions

1. *Can you recall a time when someone showed mercy to you?*
2. *Can you recall a time when you showed mercy to someone else?*

Point 1

Anger

Have you ever felt angry? If so, you probably had strong negative feelings about another person or situation. You disliked what was happening. **Anger** is an emotion that all humans feel from time to time. The feeling of anger itself is not sinful. Anger becomes sinful, however, when it leads us to say or do hurtful things.

When we are angry, we might **slander** someone, which means we say something mean about them that isn't true. We might also hurt someone physically by pushing or hitting them. That makes the other person sad. It goes against Christ's commandment to love one another as he has loved us.

We have to remember that God always loves us. He wants us to be kind like he is. St. Paul wrote, "Put away from you all bitterness and wrath and anger and wrangling and slander, together with all malice, and be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ has forgiven you." (Eph 4:31-32)

Point 2

Revenge

Some people think the only way to work out differences is by shouting and hitting. Anger sometimes tempts us to seek revenge, to "pay back" the offender with equal harm. Jesus himself felt the emotion of anger at times. But here is what he said about getting revenge:

"You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.' But I say to you, Do not resist an evildoer. But if anyone strikes you on the right cheek, turn the other also; and if anyone wants to sue you and take your coat, give your cloak as well" (Mt 5:38–40).

Christians try to make **peace** with others instead of seeking revenge. They respond to shouting and fighting with **nonviolence**, rather than more violence. Nonviolence is like peace. Living in peace means respecting the "space" of others and getting along with them. Peace is another word for "getting along" or living in harmony. Peaceful people respond to situations of anger with calmness and reason. They seek solutions that do not involve shouting and fighting.

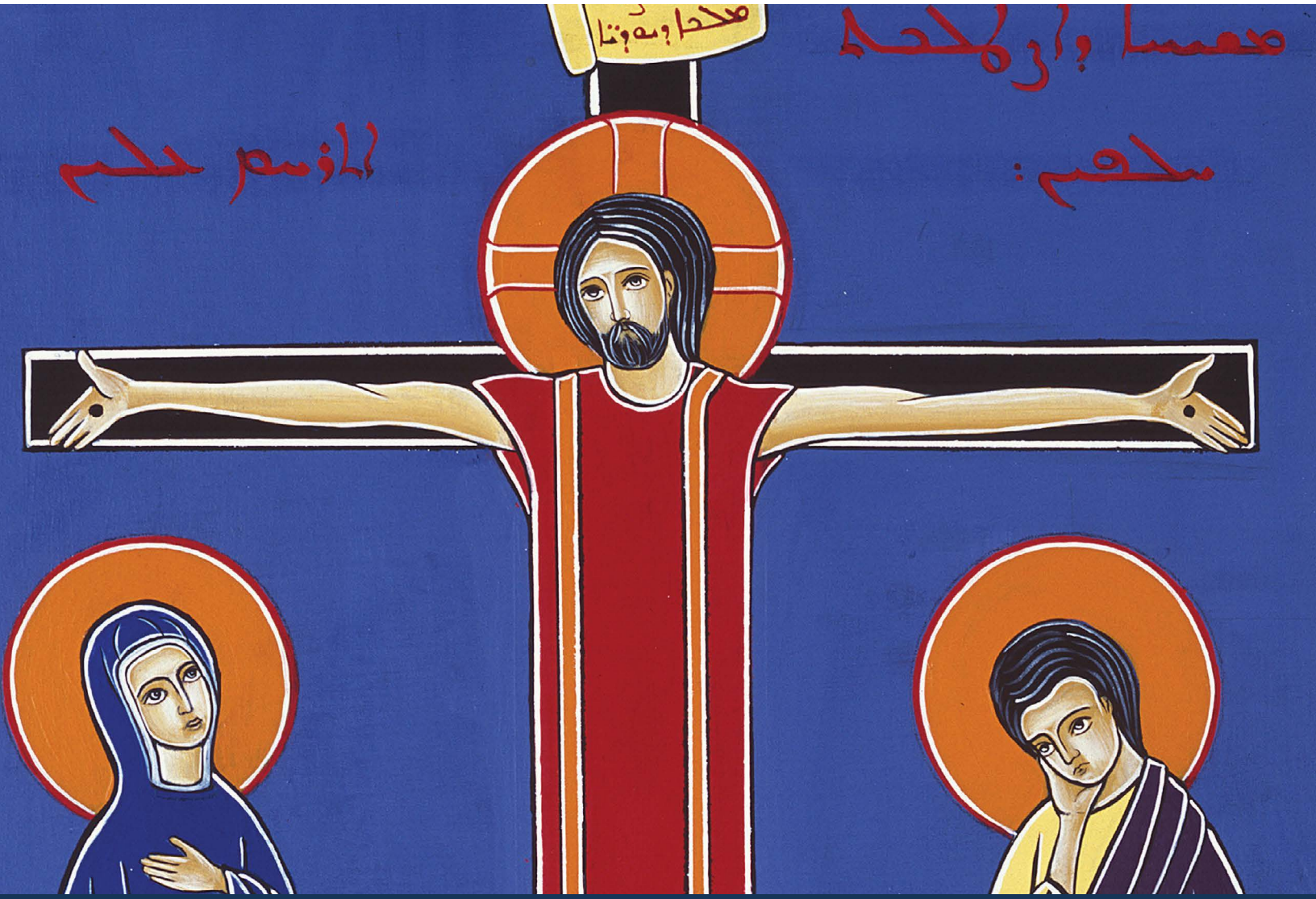
Point 3

Forgiveness

Jesus continued to forgive others and live in peace. He did these even when he was sentenced to die on the cross. The soldiers mocked him, crowned him with thorns, and spat on him. Still, Jesus did not lash out in anger. When they made him carry his cross to Golgotha, Jesus did not protest or wish bad on them. Even when they nailed him to the

cross and left him to die, Jesus prayed, “Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing” (Lk 23:34).

Most of the apostles deserted Jesus during his suffering and death. Instead of trying to help him, they hid in fear. Jesus could have been angry at them. Instead, he forgave them. Indeed, **forgiveness** was part of all the Resurrection appearances of Jesus. Very often, the first thing the risen Jesus said when he appeared to the apostles were the words, “Peace be with you.” (Jn 20:21) Jesus forgave the apostles for deserting him. He then asked them to go out to all nations, forgiving sins and baptizing people in God’s name.



Activity 1

Dealing With Anger

Directions: *Read the story below. Then brainstorm five better ways that Bobby could have dealt with his anger.*

Bobby is angry at a classmate who laughed at him while he was reading his book report. At recess, Bobby finds the boy and begins to yell at him. The boy will not apologize. So Bobby starts hitting him. They get into a big fight.

Five good ways Bobby could have dealt with his anger.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Activity 2

Forgiveness in Scripture

Directions: *Look up the Scripture verse to see if the person forgives or does not forgive.*

Acts 7:59-60

Matthew 18:28-30

Luke 15:18-20

Genesis 50:18-21

Maronite Wisdom

O Father, God of peace and Lord of security,
make us worthy to embrace one another
with a sincere kiss in the spirit of your unending love,
that we may raise glory and thanks to you,
to your only Son, and to your Holy Spirit,
now and for ever. Amen."

— *Book of Offering: Anaphora of Saint Peter*

My Role Model

Saint Francis de Sales, Bishop of Geneva

Saint Francis de Sales lived during the seventeenth century. Before becoming the Bishop of Geneva (Switzerland), he helped bring many souls into the faith, especially the Calvinists. The Calvinists were a group of Protestants who followed John Calvin. Saint Francis de Sales spent three years going door to door without any success. People would throw rocks at him or slam the door in his face. Changing his approach, he left little sermons under the Calvinists' doors. Through his writings and preaching, he helped lay people realize that they were called to holiness. He is the patron saint of writers. He is also the patron saint of the deaf because he used sign language to teach the faith to those with hearing impairments. He was known for his great mildness and forgiveness, especially towards those who tried to hurt him. He used to advise people to be patient with others' imperfections, especially their own. Today, the Church honors Saint Francis de Sales as a Doctor of the Church. We celebrate his feast day on January 24.

Saint Francis de Sales, pray for us.

Recall

If the statement is true, circle the T. If the statement is false, circle the F.

1. The virtue of mercy helps us forgive others when they have hurt us. **T | F**

2. If someone hurts us first, it is OK to hurt that person in return. **T | F**

3. The feeling of anger itself is not a sin. **T | F**

4. Christians try to make peace with others instead of seeking revenge. **T | F**

5. Jesus forgave the soldiers who nailed him to the cross. **T | F**

Weekly Journal

How you feel about Jesus inviting you to always reconcile with your brother before making any offering or prayer?

Write: The name of one person that you need to forgive and pray for.

Concluding Prayer

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours now and for ever. Amen.

Climbing the Mountain

Bonus Materials for Students & Teachers

Concerning Anger

Mt 5:21–24

"You have heard that it was said to those of ancient times, 'You shall not murder'; and 'whoever murders shall be liable to judgment.' But I say to you that if you are angry with a brother or sister, you will be liable to judgment; and if you insult a brother or sister, you will be liable to the council; and if you say, 'You fool,' you will be liable to the hell of fire. So when you are offering your gift at the altar, if you remember that your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother or sister, and then come and offer your gift."

Reflection

Our actions toward others are actions we do to God. Likewise, our attitudes towards others are attitudes we have toward God. Love of neighbor and love of God are connected. That is why mercy involves more than words and actions; it involves our attitudes toward others.

Saintly Quote

"Be angry but do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger"
— *Saint Paul (Eph. 4:26)*

Questions

1. How does anger affect you physically and emotionally?

2. What are some spiritual things you can do to address your anger peacefully?

Reaching the Summit

For Teachers & Parents

"By recalling the commandment, 'You shall not kill,' our Lord asked for peace of heart and denounced murderous anger and hatred as immoral." — *CCC 2302*

Catholic Social Teaching

Rights and Responsibilities: Pursuit of Justice and Peace

"Before being God's gift to man and a human project in conformity with the divine plan, peace is in the first place a basic attribute of God: "the Lord is peace" (Jdg 6:24). Creation, which is a reflection of the divine glory, aspires to peace. God created all that exists, and all of creation forms a harmonious whole that is good in its every part (cf. Gen 1:4, 10, 18, 21, 25, 31). Peace is founded on the primary relationship that exists between every human being and God himself, a relationship marked by righteousness (cf. Gen 17:1). Following upon the voluntary act by which man altered the divine order, the world experienced the shedding of blood and division. Violence made its appearance in interpersonal relationships (cf. Gen 4:1-16) and in social relationships (cf. Gen 11:1-9). Peace and violence cannot dwell together, and where there is violence, God cannot be present (cf. 1 Chr 22:8-9)." — *CSDC 488*

True Courage

The Bible shows how people "took courage" in different situations. It took courage for David to face Goliath (1 Sam 17:40-51). But courage doesn't always mean showing physical strength. For example, it took courage for Peter and John to appear before the Sanhedrin and defend their faith in Jesus (Acts 4:5-22). It takes moral courage to act on what we believe in, regardless of the cost. Courage is also known as fortitude, one of the gifts of the Holy Spirit that we learned about in previous lessons.

True Forgiveness

Jesus teaches about forgiveness throughout Scripture, whether it is forgiving a debt, or sin, or a transgression. In fact, it is found in the prayer Jesus taught his disciples when we say to the Father, "Forgive us our sins, as we ourselves forgive everyone indebted to us" (Lk 11:4). When Peter asked Jesus, "Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?" Jesus said to him, "Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times" (Mt 18:21–22). Jesus did not mean we could stop forgiving others on the seventy-eighth time they hurt us. Instead, we should always forgive others and try to make peace. Forgiveness allows us to remove any obstacle that lies in the way of a good relationship with others. It also allows for a closer relationship with God, because in forgiveness we experience God's love.

Discussion Questions

1. How can you teach your child about the importance of forgiveness?

2. How can you foster greater peace in your home?

Words to Know

Q. What is **anger**?

A. A negative emotion that is not sinful in itself. Anger becomes sinful when it leads us to say or do hurtful things.

Q. What is **forgiveness**?

A. Pardon for wrongs done or sin against God. When we hurt others, we need to ask for forgiveness. When others hurt us, Jesus calls us to forgive them.

Q. What is **peace**?

A. Being in harmony with others. Living in peace means being calm and reasonable. It means respecting others and getting along with them.

Scan this QR Code for more information.

FaithOfTheMountain.org/grade4/lesson19