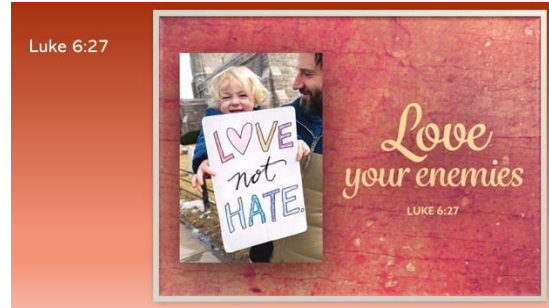


The Readings on This Day

***Click on the links for the Bible Verse(s)

Seventh Sunday after the Epiphany

On each standard Sunday of the year, we encounter the risen Christ: on this Sunday, both Jesus' mandate for his followers to forgive their enemies and Jesus' gift of forgiveness of us all, who cannot forgive as we hope to be forgiven.



[Genesis 45:3-11, 15](#)

According to the Genesis narrative, Joseph is aided toward forgiving his brothers because he trusts that God had directed everything for the greater good. However, for many Christians, it is difficult to see the hand of God underneath the power of evil. Thus this story might be helpful to some contemporary believers, but to others not. Over the centuries Christians have seen Joseph as a picture of Christ, who forgives everyone, even those who crucified him, and through whom God saves the people from certain death.

The Psalm for the Day

Having heard the story of Joseph forgiving his brothers, we join together to sing [Psalm 37:1-11, 39-40](#). This instructional acrostic psalm begins with advice that fits with the story of Joseph, through whose grace his extended family found “safe pasture” and “abundance of peace.” Joseph’s faith allows him to refrain from anger and to await God’s vindication. By praying this psalm, we adopt for ourselves the model of Joseph.

[1 Corinthians 15:35-38, 42-50](#)

Paul’s description of the resurrected body exemplifies the inability of human speech to articulate our faith in God’s new creation. Paul writes about the seed dying, which is not literally true. None of our language about eternal life can be literally accurate. Yet together we “look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come.”

[Luke 6:27-38](#)

The forgiveness from God that Luke stresses in his gospel has implications: we are to forgive others. Followers of Jesus are called into extraordinary ethics, not merely towards general goodness. The stark radicalism of these passages—love your enemies, offer the other cheek, give to everyone who begs, do not judge—has inspired some saints, such as Francis, and some movements, such as Christian pacifism, to adopt exceptional lifestyles that challenge the more ordinary life lived by most of us.