

The Readings on This Day

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

Sunday, September 11–17

Lectionary 24

The standard Sundays continue reading through Matthew. This Sunday is the final semicontinuous reading of Romans during year A.

[Genesis 50:15-21](#)

The conclusion of the Joseph legends was chosen to parallel Matthew's story of the unforgiving slave. The Christian insistence that we are to forgive one another repeats the message in the Hebrew Bible that calls for forgiveness within the community. Indeed, the popular notion that forgiveness is a virtue invented by Christians is false.

[The Psalm for the Day](#)

In response to God's mercy enacted through the forbearance of the community, we sing [Psalm 103:\[1-7\] 8-13](#). Verses 1-7 apply the images of healing and justice to divine action, and verses 8-13 praise especially God's forgiveness. Verse 13 is one of the seven times in the Hebrew Bible that God is likened to a father of all the faithful people.

[Romans 14:1-12](#)

Paul's refusal to lay down a Christian law and his call to forbearance within the community come as a "word of life" to us as in our own time we fiercely debate conflicted issues. What binds us into one is the death and resurrection of Christ, not uniformity in open questions. We are to trust that it is God who judges.

[Matthew 18:21-35](#)

This fourth discourse provides a response to the first discourse in Matthew, the Sermon on the Mount: Christians do not, in fact, live in godly perfection, but continuously need the mercy of God and the forgiveness of the community. The use



of the imagery of debt suggests that we actually owe to one another both ethical living and gracious forgiveness.