

Thursday of the Nineteenth Week in Ordinary Time

Gospel text (Mt 18:21—19:1): ... 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... 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... 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?'..."

Without God there is not forgiveness

EDITORIAL TEAM evangeli.net (based on texts by Benedict XVI)

(Città del Vaticano, Vatican)

Today, we encounter the limits of our strength to heal, to overcome evil. We run into the evil's prepotency, which we cannot control only with our own strength. That is: without God there is no forgiveness; and there is no healing without forgiveness. Not in vain the theme of "forgiveness" continually appears in the Gospel.

The ruthless servant —a high representative of the King— had been pardoned the incredible debt of ten thousand talents; but, later on, he was not willing to forgive the debt, ridiculous in comparison, of a hundred denarius, which one of his fellow servants owed him. To overcome culpability requires the price of committing our heart; and even more, to surrender our entire existence. And even this is not enough: it can only be achieved through the communion with He Who took upon Himself the load of all our sins.

—O Lord, whatever we should mutually be forgiving is always very little compared with the benevolence with which you forgive everyone.