

St Magnus Cathedral, Kirkwall

www.stmagnus.org

Scottish Charity SCO 05322/CCL No 119086

www.facebook.com/StMagnusCathedralCongregation



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Welcome to St Magnus Cathedral this morning. It was founded in 1137 by St Rognvald, in honour of Magnus, his uncle. The Cathedral belongs to the people of Orkney and its doors are open to all. If you are a visitor, we hope this order of service will help you feel part of our worship together.

SUNDAY 11th October

You can find our Sunday worship here.

<https://www.facebook.com/StMagnusCathedralCongregation/>

Join our Wednesday ZOOM meditation by signing up here.

stmagnuszoom@gmail.com

Opening meditation

What say we to continuing and re-creating community so that it makes a difference in our lives and with those around? What say we to being the ones the world is waiting for? Might the creed of being the change we wish to see in the world become a bit closer, a bit more realized, a bit more observed in ones close to us – or in unseen and needy folks far away? Will we be the kind of community which will be and become a blessing to the larger scene around? A cool running stream in hot desert sands? A song to the songless, an embrace to those marginalized, a comforting voice to those only knowing judgment, rules and discouragement?

Reading from Matthew chapter 18 Rosemary Moon

Peter came up to Jesus and asked, "How many times should I forgive someone who does something wrong to me? Is seven times enough?" Jesus answered: Not just seven times, but seventy-seven times! This story will show you what the kingdom of heaven is like:

One day a king decided to call in his officials and ask them to give an account of what they owed him. As he was doing this, one official was brought in who owed him fifty million silver coins. But he didn't have any money to pay what he owed. The king ordered him to be sold, along with his wife and children and all he owned, in order to pay the debt.

The official got down on his knees and began begging, "Have pity on me, and I will pay you every cent I owe!" The king felt sorry for him and let him go free. He even told the official that he did not have to pay back the money.

As the official was leaving, he happened to meet another official, who owed him a hundred silver coins. So he grabbed the man by the throat. He started choking him and said, "Pay me what you owe!"

The man got down on his knees and began begging, "Have pity on me, and I will pay you back." But the first official refused to have pity. Instead, he went and had the other official put in jail until he could pay what he owed.

When some other officials found out what had happened, they felt sorry for the man who had been put in jail. Then they told the king what had happened. The king called the first official back in and said, "You're an evil man! When you begged for mercy, I said you did not have to pay back a cent. Don't you think you should show pity to someone else, as I did to you?" The king was so angry that he ordered the official to be tortured until he could pay back everything he owed. That is how my Father in heaven will treat you, if you don't forgive each of my followers with all your heart.

**Until we can see ourselves in the words we read
and the stories we hear, it is easy
to remark on the rest of the world.
So may the light of these words fall strong
upon each of us, that we can find the truth they reveal
in our own hearts this day**

Reflection

The act of forgiveness must be one of the greatest gifts of spiritual life. Not least because it is one of, if not the hardest to implement! It enables us and the world to be released from the sorrows of the past. Forgiveness is an act of the heart, a movement to let go of the resentment and outrage that we have carried for too long. It eases the burden of pain in our heart. To forgive does not mean we condone the misdeeds of another or ever allow them again. It acknowledges that no matter what or how much we may have suffered, we will not put another human being out of our heart. We have all been harmed, just as we have all, at times, harmed ourselves and others.

For most people, forgives is a process. The work of forgiveness goes through many stages, during which we may feel grief, rage, sorrow, fear, and confusion. In the end, when we let ourself feel the pain we carry, forgiveness can come as a relief, as a

release for our heart. We can see that forgiveness is fundamentally for our own sake, a way to let go of the pain of the past.

Like any worthwhile process, forgiveness needs practice and intention. We can even meditate on forgiveness to help us. Taking time to focus can allow ourselves to feel all the barriers we have erected and the emotions that we have carried because we have not forgiven — not forgiven ourselves, not forgiven others. Let ourselves feel the pain of keeping our heart closed. Then, we can begin to ask and extend forgiveness, letting the images and feelings that come up grow deeper as we experience them.

FORGIVENESS OF OTHERS:

There are many ways that we have hurt and harmed others, have betrayed or abandoned them, caused them suffering, knowingly or unknowingly, out of our pain, fear, anger, and confusion. Can we remember and visualize the ways we have hurt others. See and feel the pain we have caused out of our own fear and confusion. Feel our own sorrow and regret. Sense that finally we can release this burden and ask for forgiveness. In picturing each memory that still burdens our heart we make it real. And then to each person in our mind can we repeat: I ask for your forgiveness, I ask for your forgiveness.

Then perhaps even more importantly.

FORGIVENESS FOR YOURSELF:

There are many ways that we have hurt and harmed ourselves. We have betrayed or abandoned ourselves many times through thought, word, or deed, knowingly and unknowingly. Can we feel our own precious body and life. Let ourselves see the ways we have hurt or harmed ourselves. Can we picture them, remember them. Feel the sorrow we have carried from this and sense that we can release these burdens. Extend forgiveness for each of them, one by one. Can we repeat to ourselves: For the ways I have hurt myself through action or inaction, out of fear, pain, and confusion, I now extend a full and heartfelt forgiveness. I forgive myself, I forgive myself.

Maybe most difficult of all

FORGIVENESS FOR THOSE WHO HAVE HURT OR HARMED YOU:

There are many ways we have been harmed by others, abused or abandoned, knowingly or unknowingly, in thought, word, or deed. Can we picture and remember these many ways however painful. Feel the sorrow we have carried from this past and sense that we can release this burden of pain by extending forgiveness.... When our heart is ready. Can we say to ourselves... I now remember the many ways others have hurt or harmed me, wounded me, out of fear, pain, confusion, and anger. I have

carried this pain in my heart too long. To the extent that I am ready, I offer them forgiveness. To those who have caused me harm, I offer my forgiveness, I forgive.

These short practices will not suddenly make everything fine and dandy. We may have to gently repeat these three directions for forgiveness many times until we can feel a release in our heart. For some great pains we may not feel a release but only the burden and the anguish or anger we have held. Touch this softly.

Be forgiving of ourself for not being ready to let go and move on. Forgiveness cannot be forced; it cannot be artificial. Simply continue the practice and let the words and images work gradually in their own way. As many others who have walked this journey before us will testify, in time we can make the forgiveness practice a regular part of our life, letting go of the past and opening our heart to each new moment with a wise loving kindness.

Prayer

We pray for people around our world
caught up in situations of conflict and violence
or suffering from famine or disaster.

We are embodied with them now.

We pray for the people and communities of faith
from whom we have come
and to whom we shall return.

We pray for those who are sick,
those who are bereaved and oppressed,
and those who are homeless.

We are embodied with them now.

We pray for the broken
and torn fabric of the earth
as it yearns for healing.

We are embodied with Christ in creation now.

And because Christ is one with us,
may we be enabled to share his life with the world by
sharing our own lives with the world.

May we live together in harmony and peace.

Amen.

Blessing

No matter what kind of a week you are facing,
be it heavy with onerous duties,
or light with pleasures and joys,

or tough with difficult decisions,
The grace of Christ makes the load lighter,
the love of God makes the joy sweeter,
the peace of the Spirit makes the decision bolder;

May you stay safe in the Way of Christ, and may you be blessed by his Spirit this day
and always.