# LSW

children

*Finish off by bringing up the Our Father. Discuss the significance of the line* Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. *Note that we are effectively asking God not to forgive us if we do not forgive others.*

*Do not recite the Our Father during the LSW. Liturgically, the place for the Our Father is during the communion rite - you are still in the Liturgy of the Word. But explain to the children that you expect them to reflect carefully. Ask the children to remember that line in the Our Father the next time they pray the prayer, which is soon at the mass.*

Year A

Twenty-fourth Ordinary Sunday

**Images**

Forgiving others

**Points to note**

Every child loves a story. So, tell this story well. If necessary, embellish it with details. To do this, though, you will have to prepare well for it. Take your time with the story. It is dramatic. Tell it with drama.

You may want to dramatise the actions, perhaps, even get the children to act out the roles. Be careful with the choice for the roles. A sensitive child should not play the role of the first servant.

The reading should be able to lead the children on to something very close to them, the *Our Father*. The parable isn’t just a fun story or even a moralising one. It deals very much with the Christian love triangle between God, our neighbour and ourselves. It is important to emphasise the words of the prayer that we pray every day; and the concept that we should not expect forgiveness from God if we do not forgive in our turn.

Introduce the concept of justice to the children. This concept however may be a little too abstract for some but you can tackle it through the concept of fairness. Children normally have a keen sense of fairness and it would be expected for them to react as the other servants had in the story.

## Liturgy

Acclamation before the Gospel

Alleluia! Alleluia!

Speak, Lord, your servant is listening:

you have the message of eternal life.

Alleluia!

Gospel

The Lord be with you.

*All:*  And also with you.

A Reading from the Holy Gospel according to St Matthew

*All:*  Glory to you O Lord

(Mt 18: 21-35)

Peter went up to Jesus and said, “Lord, how often must I forgive my brothers if he does something wrong to me? As often as seven times?” Jesus answered, “Not seven, I tell you, but seventy-seven times.

“And so the kingdom of heaven is like a king who decided to his servants to settle what they owed him. When the counting began, they brought him a man who owed him $10 million; but he had no means of paying, so his master gave orders that he should be sold, together with his wife and children and all that he owned, to meet the debt.

At this, the servant threw himself down at his master’s feet. “Give me time,” he said, “and I will pay you the whole sum.” And the servant’s master felt so sorry for him that he let him go and cancelled the debt.

Now, as the servant went out, he happened to meet a fellow servant who owed him $10; and he seized him by the throat and began to throttle him. “Pay what you owe me,” he said. His fellow servant fell at his feet and implored him, saying, “Give me time and I will pay you.” But the other would not agree; instead, he had him thrown into prison until he paid the debt.

His fellow servants were upset when they saw what had happened, and they went to their master and reported it to him. Then the master sent for him. “You wicked servant,” he said, “I cancelled all that debt of yours when you appealed to me. Should you not, then, have pity on your fellow servant just as I had pity on you?” And in his anger, the master handed him over to the torturers till he should pay all his debt. And that is how my heavenly Father will deal with you unless you each forgive your brother from your heart.”

This is the Gospel of the Lord

**Discussion**

*Go through the story with the children again. Discuss how the various persons in the story would have felt: the king on seeing the first servant pleading at his feet; the servant on being told of his debts and then, that his debts are cancelled; the second servant of being told of his debt and then, being thrown into prison; the other servants and the king on hearing that the second servant has been thrown into prison. In the discussion, the fairness and justice of the affair should be questioned.*

*Draw the analogy of the story with ourselves, that God is the king and we are the servants. God watches over us in our actions to forgive us our wrongs. But he also watches over us to ensure that we forgive our neighbours.*

*Discuss also the role of the other servants. They didn't stand aside when they saw the injustice. Instead, they reported to their employer. So, do we stand aside or do we do something when we see something wrong.*