

I care becomes a bookmark it will accompany you this month and help you live this Word of Life.

FROM

BRAZIL



**FORGIVING
ALWAYS WINS OUT
IN THE END!**

One day my mother called us together and told us that she was going to leave my dad. He drank a lot and when he was drunk, he often beat her.

The three of us had to choose who we wanted to stay with. We were totally shocked because we hadn't been aware that anything was wrong. But then in the next few days, I saw that alcohol was making my dad a different person. It scared me, so I left with my mom.

When my dad promised he wouldn't drink any more, we all came back home, but it didn't last long. He started again, and became more and more violent.

On New Year's Day he threw us out of the house, and to have somewhere to live, we had to break a window in my grandmother's house, since she was out of town. In that moment I wondered if God was really with us. I understood that I had to forgive my dad and try to see what was good for him. I knew that alcohol could kill him, and so I tried to convince him to go to a residential program for alcoholics.

At first he told me he didn't need help from anyone, but thanks to a priest who talked to him, he understood that he really did need help. Two months later, he came home from the hospital.

We were very worried that he wouldn't manage to stay away from drinking, but he did! It's been a few years now since he stopped and we have peace and harmony in our family – which is the only thing we wanted!

Let's think well about whether there's someone we still need to forgive...

«FORGIVE YOUR NEIGHBOR THE WRONG DONE TO YOU, AND THEN YOUR SINS WILL BE PARDONED WHEN YOU PRAY.»
(Sir 28:2)

From a commentary by Chiara Lubich – adapted by the Gen 3 Center

God forgives because, like every father or mother, he loves his children, and so he always forgives them. He puts his trust in them and encourages them, **without ever giving up on them**. His greatest desire is that they treat one another as brothers and sisters, get along with each other and love one another. **To make the whole world one family - that's the wonderful plan of God for humanity.**

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ALWAYS
READY
TO
FORGIVE



FORGIVING
RIGHT AWAY
IS NOT
ENOUGH

It takes real courage to forgive others. It's true love because there's nothing in it for ourselves. «If you love those who love you, what reward will you have?» Everyone does that. Instead Jesus says, «Love your enemies.» Mutual love requires that we make a pact with one another – to be ready to always forgive each other. It's the only way we can help to make all people one family.

Forgiving others is the necessary requirement for us to be forgiven. **God hears us and forgives us in the measure that we forgive others.** We need to search the innermost recesses of our heart and eliminate any sense of indifference towards others, a lack of kindness, an attitude of superiority, or neglect towards anyone we meet.



I SEE
EVERYONE
ALWAYS
NEW

So every day I will try to see each person with new eyes, in my family, at school, with my friends, ready to overlook anything that I don't like about their way of doing things, not judging them, but trusting them, always hoping, always believing. I will approach every person with this total amnesty in my heart, with this universal pardon. I will try not to remember their faults at all, I will cover over everything with love.