WoL

"Forgive your neighbor the wrong they have done and then your sins will be pardoned when you pray."

In a society like ours, where violence often erupts, forgiveness is a difficult issue to face.

How can you forgive someone who has deeply hurt you or betrayed your trust?

IT TAKES COURAGE!

Our first instinct is to get even with the other person by doing something mean back to them. But this just starts a vicious circle of anger and hostility. We might keep grudges or become spiteful towards others.

The Word of God is powerful when applied to situations of conflict. It clearly tells us, in no uncertain terms, that we have to forgive, which is a very courageous and difficult response.

YOU CAN ALWAYS **START OVER**

We make mistakes sometimes, too, and we would like to be forgiven! We ask for it and hope we will be given the opportunity to start over again. We would like people to trust us again! **If that's how *we* feel, wouldn't the person who hurt us want the same? Aren't we supposed to love others as we would like to be loved?**

OVERCOME EVIL **WITH GOOD**

Forgiving is not a sign of weakness.

To forgive someone requires an act of the will, something we do freely. It means we welcome the other person just as they are, no matter how they have hurt us, just like God welcomes us, even though we are sinners and have our own shortcomings.

Cut and fold

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it's our Life

Will, 16 yrs old

IT'S ALWAYS POSSIBLE TO FORGIVE!

After my parents separated, I started having a hard time with my mom. Our relationship had changed. Even though we lived in the same house, I had the impression that she wasn't treating me as her son, but only as a person that she was forced to raise. I noticed that she was like this with my brother, too, and that made me suffer even more! The way she was behaving both at home and outside made me feel very sad.

I grew up feeling very angry towards her and her bad attitude...
After living like this for a long time, she decided she had to change. She realized that she had lost a lot of time. However, I couldn't manage to accept her, because I couldn't get over the way she had treated us. It had left an indelible mark on me and I just couldn't forgive her for that.

Then as I thought more about it, I realized that not being able to forgive was making me suffer, too.
I told myself that I was the one who had to be the first to forgive and see her as a new person. But even though I understood this with my head, I still found it hard to love her.

One night I was talking heart-to-heart with Jesus and I asked him to make my love for her greater than the hatred I was feeling. Now I am struggling to show her my love, even just in little ways.
I know that I have to see her with new eyes, and that what matters is not the past, but the love she is trying to give me now. I feel the strength to love her and, little by little, the pain is going away. What's important is to see one another always new, starting over every time we fail.

Did you ever have an experience like this?