



*Serving the Spiritual Needs of Grieving Parents  
Whose Children of Any Age Have Died by Any Cause,  
No Matter How Long Ago*

**Your Emmaus Ministry  
Remote Retreat Guide**

**August 22, 2020**

**9:30am EDT**

(or a convenient time for you)

**SELF-FORGIVENESS**

*"I think that if God forgives us we must forgive ourselves. Otherwise, it is almost like setting up ourselves as a higher tribunal than Him."*

– C.S. Lewis

Recently we focused on forgiving others. This week we reflect on a topic close to many grieving parents' hearts: *Self-Forgiveness*.



# SELF-FORGIVENESS

## **Preparation:**

Ahead of time, we recommend you find a quiet place in your home where you can immerse yourself in this retreat. Have your child's Emmaus Memorial Candle (or other candle) available along with a lighter or matches.

Take several deep breaths to cleanse your thoughts and open yourself to wherever the Holy Spirit is calling you today several minutes before the retreat is scheduled to begin.

At 9:30am EDT open your email and join other fellow Emmaus Parent Companions in getting away from the rest of the world, at least for a time, to focus on God and on your precious child.

## **CANDLE LIGHTING PRAYER** (Light your candle)

We begin... In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, Amen

Lord, you are the Light of the World. *Help us feel your presence in the lighting of this candle.*

Lord, you gave us the gift of our children. *Help us feel their presence in the lighting of this candle.*

Lord, you gave us the hope of eternal life. *Help us confirm that hope in the lighting of this candle.*

Lord, you gave us love. *Help us to know that, as much as we love our children, you love them even more.*

We ask you this through Christ, Our Lord  
Amen.

**OPENING SONG:** [Forgive Yourself](#) by Downhere  
*"Come out of the prison."*

## **PRAYER OF THOSE MAKING A RETREAT**

Loving Spirit of Wisdom,  
Guide my thoughts and my memories.

In the light of your love,  
May I see what is important for me to remember,  
What is important for me to hold to my heart,  
And what I need to simply let go of in peace.

I trust you to be my guide,  
Even when the path seems unclear to me.

We pray this in the name of Your Son, the Healer,  
Our Lord, Jesus Christ.  
Amen.

## **SCRIPTURE READING**

### **Psalm 32**

Blessed is the one whose fault is removed, whose sin is forgiven.

Blessed is the man to whom the Lord imputes no guilt,  
in whose spirit is no deceit.

Because I kept silent, my bones wasted away; I groaned all day long.

For day and night your hand was heavy upon me; my strength withered as in dry summer heat.

Then I declared my sin to you;  
my guilt I did not hide.

I said, "I confess my transgression to the Lord," and you took away the guilt of my sin.

Therefore every loyal person should pray to you  
in time of distress.

Though flood waters threaten, they will never reach him.

You are my shelter; you guard me from distress;  
with joyful shouts of deliverance you surround me.

I will instruct you and show you the way you should walk,  
give you counsel with my eye upon you.

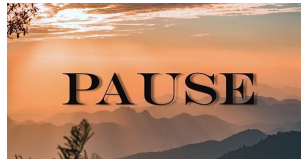
Do not be like a horse or mule, without understanding;  
with bit and bridle their temper is curbed, else they will not come to you.

Many are the sorrows of the wicked one,  
but mercy surrounds the one who trusts in the Lord.

Be glad in the LORD and rejoice, you righteous; exult, all you upright of heart.

The Word of the Lord.  
Thanks be to God.

**REFLECTION #1: [Forgive Yourself](#)** by Ken Yasinski  
*"Have you considered forgiving yourself for not being perfect?"*



Take a moment to pause... breathe... savor what you have received from the Reflection #1.

Clear your mind before focusing on Reflection #2.

**REFLECTION #2: [Self Forgiveness](#)** by Sarah Coleman

*"Of all the people I have had to forgive... I have been the hardest."*

### **PRAYER**

#### **Lord, Help Me Forgive Myself**

Dear Lord,

I come before you humbly today asking you to help me forgive myself. I have looked back on my past way too long. And I am tired of feeling like I could have done better every single day.

To be honest, when I think this way a part of me knows that it is right. I really could have made better choices, but I cannot go back and change it. The only thing I am in control of now is my future. I cannot live life backward.

Lord, right now I release all my anxiety into your hands. It is not your will that I hate myself for what I have done.

Lord, when I hate myself, I hate the very thing that you have created.

Not only do I pray for myself but I also pray for other people that are struggling with forgiving themselves.

Unforgiveness can make you feel so insecure. Help them accept themselves for their shortcomings because your Holy Word states: "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23).

Lord, as you cleanse and purify our hearts from unforgiveness, help us understand that "all of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags" (Isaiah 64:6).

God, imperfection is a considerable part of our earthly nature. Help us accept our flaws and know that you love us in spite of them.

In Jesus name,  
Amen.

**CLOSING SONG:** [Hosea \(Come Back to Me\)](#) by Gregory Norbet performed by John Michael Talbot  
*Long have I waited...*

### **CLOSING BLESSING**

Let us end our time of retreat...united with Brother John Maganzini, OFM and the Franciscan Friars at Saint Anthony Shrine in Boston, MA, by blessing one another.

Raise your right hand and, together, let us pray...

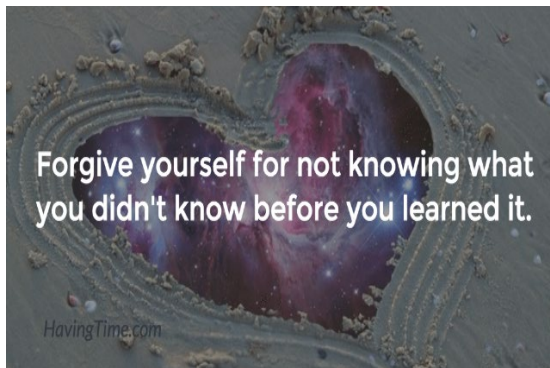
**Lord Jesus,**

You opened the eyes of the blind, healed the sick, and forgave the sinful woman.  
After Peter's denial, you confirmed him in your love.

May you hear our prayer this day.  
May you renew your love in our hearts.  
May you help us forgive ourselves for any transgressions against you;  
Any transgressions against our children;  
And any transgressions against those we love.

May we proclaim your saving power  
to all the world.

We ask this  
In the name of the Father, Your Son, and the Holy Spirit,  
Amen.



**FOR FURTHER REFLECTION...**

[Forgiving Ourselves](#) by Mother Angelica  
*"You don't have to feel forgiven; you are forgiven."*



You will receive a new Emmaus Remote Retreat  
email next Friday.

Please join your fellow  
Emmaus Parent Companions  
again next Saturday at 9:30am EDT

Until then, may God bless you and keep you.  
Sending many warm, virtual hugs

For past Remote Retreats, see [here](#).

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**REMINDER**

We have concluded our  
Emmaus Ministry LIVE Virtual Gathering Series.  
If you were not able to join us for our Reflections  
--or would like to see them again--  
you can access these inspiring talks [here](#).



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