

Twenty Third Sunday in Ordinary Time – Year A (Mt 18: 15-20)

05th & 06th of September 2026

Dear friends,

In today's Gospel, Jesus teaches us how to handle disagreements within our church family. He knows that because we are human, we will sometimes hurt or upset each other. Jesus doesn't tell us to ignore the problem, nor does he tell us to gossip behind someone's back. Instead, he tells us to go directly to the person, quietly and lovingly, to talk it out. He reminds us that whenever two or three of us gather in his name to make peace, he is right there with us.

This message is all about protecting our parish family and keeping our community united in love. It takes real courage to talk to someone gently when we are hurt, but it is exactly what Jesus calls us to do.

Think of a story about two neighbours, Tom and John, who shared a wooden fence between their backyards. One day, a fierce storm blew a large tree branch from Tom's yard right through John's prize-winning flowerbed, breaking the fence. John was furious. Instead of talking to Tom, he spent days angry, complaining to everyone else in the street. The tension grew, and the neighbours stopped speaking.

Finally, a wise friend said to John, "Have you actually talked to Tom about it?" John took a deep breath, walked next door, and told Tom how upset he was about his flowers. Tom was shocked—he hadn't even realized how much damage the branch had caused! He immediately apologized, brought his tools over, fixed the fence, and helped John replant

the flowers. By talking openly and gently, they didn't just fix a fence—they saved their friendship.

As parishioners, we are all neighbours in God's house. When someone offends us or makes a mistake, Jesus asks us not to build walls of anger or gossip. He asks us to walk across the yard, speak with kindness, and rebuild the connection. When we choose forgiveness over fighting, we allow the mercy of God to live in our parish.

Let us pray:

Lord Jesus, thank You for the gift of our parish family. Give us the humility to forgive, the courage to make peace, and the love to stay united. Amen.