Forgive us Our Debts…

Matt.6: 12

"*Forgive us our trespasses as we for give those who trespass against us.*"

We have an obligation to extend forgiveness to others. People who are unforgiving cannot understand or accept the forgiveness God offers. Any one who is not will to forgive another has not experienced God's forgiveness. When we refuse to forgive others, we are asking God not to forgive us.

There are many people who refuse to forgive – they harbour resentment and hold grudges. Victims become bitter, wishing to get even. A victim of crime one said "*If you could lick my heart it would poison you.*" We often hear people say; *"I forgive but I will never forget!"* To those I say keep on being unforgiving but do not forget your own forgiveness. Jesus says ; "Happy are those who are merciful to others; God will be merciful to them" [Mk.5:7].

What if Jesus dealt with us as we deal with others? It is risky to pray "*forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.*" Do we really want God to be forgiving as us? How could we have the nerve to ask for forgiveness if we are unwilling to offer forgiveness to others. Being unwilling to forgive is like burning the bridge we will need to cross ourselves.

God generously holds out forgiveness to us. The Apostle John writes, "If we claim to be without sin we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness" [1 John 1: 8-9]. This is our assurance of pardon.

LCM-PUC
12/10/03