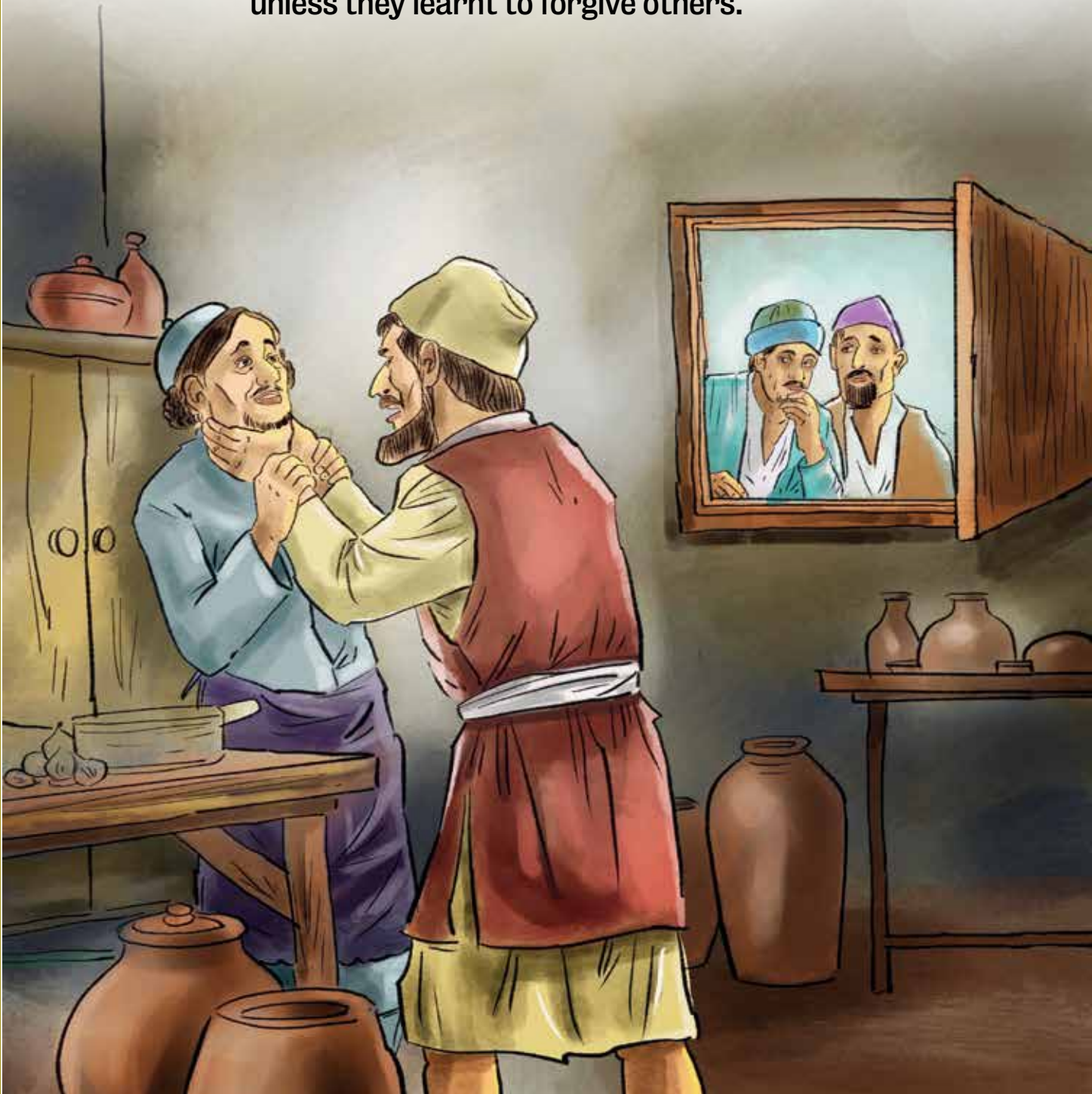


The Unforgiving Debtor



Jesus not only taught people to love one another, but also called upon them to learn to forgive. He cautioned that the forgiveness of God would mean nothing unless they learnt to forgive others.



The Jews would forgive someone no more than three times. But Jesus told His disciple Peter to forgive not seven times, but seventy times seven, by which Jesus meant that forgiveness should be unlimited.

The Kingdom of Heaven can be compared to a king who decided to bring his accounts up to date with his servants who had borrowed money from him. He ordered one of them who owed him a big sum to be sold—along with his wife, his children, and everything he owned—to pay the debt.

The servant fell on his knees and begged for more time to repay the debt. The king took pity on him and forgave his debt. But the man went home and caught a fellow servant who owed him a small sum and put him in prison until the debt could be paid in full.

When the king heard this, he was very angry and put him in prison. If the servant was bent on being unforgiving to others, then he had no right to seek forgiveness, the king said.

Jesus taught His disciples to pray to God asking Him to ‘forgive us as we forgive those who sin against us’. His followers seek forgiveness from their brothers and sisters during the Holy Mass.

There is great healing in Christian forgiveness, which is triangular: forgiving oneself, forgiving others, and then receiving God’s forgiveness. When all three take place, only then does forgiveness become complete.



Word of God

Matthew 18: 32 – 35

So he called the servant in. ‘You worthless slave!’ he said. ‘I forgave you the whole amount you owed me, just because you asked me to. You should have had mercy on your fellow servant, just as I had mercy on you.’ The king was very angry, and he sent the servant to jail to be punished until he should pay back the whole amount.” And Jesus concluded, “That is how my Father in Heaven will treat every one of you unless you forgive your brother from your heart.”

Insight

Haregaon village in Ahmednagar district is a major Marian devotion centre in Maharashtra. Lakhs of



Christian and non-Christian devotees visit the two-day Matmauli Yatra held in Haregaon on the weekend that follows September 8, the birthday of Mother Mary. The Matmauli Yatra was started by German missionary Gerhard Baadar in 1948 for the convenience of local devotees who could not afford to attend the Mount Mary Church or Mot

Mauli feast celebrations at Bandra in Mumbai.

Notes

Know Now

Pope John Paul II was shot and wounded by Mehmet Ali Agca on 13 May 1981 at Saint Peter's Square, Vatican City. The Pope said that he had sincerely forgiven Agca. He met Agca in jail two years later and directly conveyed his words of forgiveness to his assailant. This meeting became the most reported, and written about, event of forgiveness in the 20th century.

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Read about Pope John Paul II and his act of forgiveness or watch the movie "Liberating a Continent" or any other movies on Saint Pope John Paul II.