

Scripture Reading: John 3:14-21

*To forgive is to set a prisoner free, and then discover
that the prisoner was you! —Lewis B. Smedes*

Among the best of children’s literature is Kenneth Grahame’s *The Wind in the Willows*. In the first chapter, “The River Bank,” the Mole meets the Rat and they become fast friends. The Rat takes the Mole for a boat ride. The Rat rows. But the Mole is eager to row, too. But the Rat won’t let him, saying that the Mole does not have the experience yet to row a boat.

Angry, the Mole suddenly seizes the oars — with disastrous results. Soon the boat has overturned, and their lunch box is momentarily lost, and of course the two of them were plunged into the water.

A chastened Mole then offers a wonderful example of a good apology. He says: *Ratty, my generous friend! I am very sorry indeed for my foolish and ungrateful conduct. My heart quite fails me when I think how I might have lost that beautiful luncheon-basket. Indeed, I have been a complete [fool], and I know it. Will you overlook it this once and forgive me, and let things go on as before?*

The Mole expresses repentance, he identifies his wrongdoing, he acknowledges the harm caused to the other person, and he specifically asks for forgiveness and a restoration of goodwill.

Pretty good apology, don’t you think?

It is appropriate during Lent to think about how we make amends. Many people believe that simply saying “sorry” is enough. But it is not enough, as the psalmist David well understood when he wrote Psalm 51: *My sin is ever before me. Against you, you alone, have I sinned ... Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. ... Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me. Do not cast me away from your presence, and do not take your holy spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation* (vv. 3-4, 7, 10-12).

During your prayer time today, ask God to show you if there is anyone from whom you need to seek forgiveness. Then come clean with God, and God will restore to you “the joy of your salvation.”

—Timothy Merrill

Prayer: Thank you, loving God, for your infinite mercy and grace. Amen.

Daily Bible Readings

- Sunday:** Mark 14-16
Monday: Numbers 1-3
Tuesday: Numbers 4-6
Wednesday: Numbers 7-10
Thursday: Numbers 11-14
Friday: Numbers 15-17
Saturday: Psalms 29-30



QUIK QUIZ!

Our readings this quarter have taken us through the Pentateuch, or first five books of the Old Testament. Test your comprehension by arranging these biblical characters **chronologically**.

- ___ Joseph
- ___ Noah
- ___ Abraham
- 1 Adam
- ___ Joshua
- ___ Moses
- ___ Pharaoh
- ___ Cain
- ___ Rachel
- ___ Ishmael

THE COMPLETE ALPHABET

Use **all** 26 letters of the alphabet to complete the following 11 words, but use each letter only once. Keep track of the letters you use by crossing off the letters in the alphabet below:

**A B C D E F G H I J K L M N
O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z**

1. __ a __ z
2. __ u i __
3. __ u __ c a
4. e __ __ m p l e
5. __ i o __ __ n
6. __ a __ __ f u l
7. __ r o __ __
8. __ e __ __ a t
9. __ __ a l a
10. __ o l a __
11. __ o r c __ p i n e

Try to Figure This OUT!

All answers end with OUT. Using the clues provided, fill in the spaces. Solution below.

		O	U	T				
			O	U	T			
				O	U	T		
					O	U	T	
						O	U	T

CLUES (from top row to bottom row):

- ▶ Water can opening
- ▶ Arrangement
- ▶ Rescue from financial ruin
- ▶ Brief fainting spell
- ▶ Reversal

ANSWERS: Quik Quiz — 7,3,4,1,10,9,8,2,6,5; **The Complete Alphabet** — 1. jazz, 2. quit, 3. yucca, 4. example, 5. violin, 6. bashful, 7. grown, 8. defeat, 9. koala, 10. molar, 11. Porcupine. **Try to Figure This OUT!** — spout, layout, bailout, blackout, turnabout.

“Weeping may stay for the night, but rejoicing comes in the morning.”

—Psalm 30:5 NIV