

## WALKED OVER

### YEAR 1, 5th Sunday of Lent

Read Matthew 5:38-42 aloud: “[Jesus remarked,] ‘You have heard that it was said, ‘An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. ’But I say to you, offer no resistance to one who is evil. When someone strikes you on [your] right cheek, turn the other one to him as well. If anyone wants to go to law with you over your tunic, hand him your cloak as well. Should anyone press you into service for one mile, go with him for two miles. Give to the one who asks of you, and do not turn your back on one who wants to borrow.’”

Explain that Jesus is not recommending that we play nice with one another even when they don’t deserve it.

Jesus is commanding us to give Him our own prideful, stubborn and malicious hearts so that He can make us loving hearts like His. It appears as if we are being “walked over”, stepped on, taken advantage of, but this is not true when we unite our suffering to the suffering of Jesus Christ crucified. Jesus tells us that only by acknowledging the reality of sin (that which injures, destroys, harasses and mocks life) and juxtaposing it with God’s love can we break down its barriers and redeem the injury it causes. Jesus commands that we remove ourselves from our pride so that we can serve the sinner and destroy the effects of the sin.

“It is not in our power not to feel or forget an offense; but the heart that offers itself to the Holy Spirit turns injury into compassion and purifies the memory in transforming hurt into intercession.” (Universal Catechism 2843)

“We have a special authority over the soul of someone who causes us to suffer. Their actions have bound them to us in the mercy of God. Mercy is love that suffers the evil of another to affirm his dignity so that he does not have to suffer alone. Whenever someone hurts us physically or even emotionally, he has demeaned himself even more. He is even in more need of mercy.” (Cfr, Saint Thomas Aquinas, Summa Theologica, II-II, q.30)

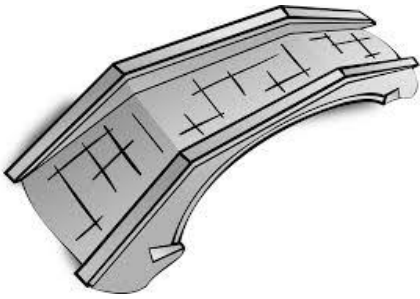
Acknowledge that one of the biggest inhibitors of our spiritual growth is lack of forgiveness: we can’t draw closer to God because we don’t want to draw closer to love. Invite the group to tackle this dilemma by first identifying these problems with Christ’s solutions.

Divide the group into three to five teams and have them elect a captain. Hand the captains a “‘Be the Bridge’ Scattergories” page and one writing instrument. Explain that the teams are going to try to come up with unique solutions to the problems you are going to call out. If teams share any answers they won’t receive any points for those answers. Warn the teams that they only have 30 seconds to deliberate and answer each hurtful scenario with a “Deed” (an action of charity), “Word” (what you say in compassion) and “Prayer” (intercession-the opposite of the hurt inflicted) that will intercede with mercy for the person who hurt you. Emphasize that mercy means to counteract sin with love so the teams’ answers are required to be a counteraction to the particular sin/hurt.

Scenarios:

- Someone shares an unflattering photo of you on social media
- A friend tells a lie about you
- Someone steals the money out of your wallet
- Someone uses a derogatory term to refer to your friend
- Someone hits you in the hallway at school
- A customer is rude to you while you serve them at work
- Your sibling takes something from your closet after you told them no

Wrap things up by explaining that Confession is the “primary organ” of the Church. She needs that organ to survive and, in turn, thrive. Emphasize that, if we want to draw closer to God, then we need to draw closer to the sacraments to learn about love and become love through them.



# "BE THE BRIDGE" SCATTERGORIES

MERCY | FORGIVENESS | INTERCESSION | JOY

1. DEED \_\_\_\_\_  
WORD \_\_\_\_\_  
PRAYER \_\_\_\_\_
  
2. DEED \_\_\_\_\_  
WORD \_\_\_\_\_  
PRAYER \_\_\_\_\_
  
3. DEED \_\_\_\_\_  
WORD \_\_\_\_\_  
PRAYER \_\_\_\_\_
  
4. DEED \_\_\_\_\_  
WORD \_\_\_\_\_  
PRAYER \_\_\_\_\_
  
5. DEED \_\_\_\_\_  
WORD \_\_\_\_\_  
PRAYER \_\_\_\_\_