

**The Twenty-Fourth Sunday of the Year (A)  
September 11, 2011**

**Mass for the Annual Convention of the National Catholic Development Conference  
The Peabody Hotel, Orlando, Florida**

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*S.S.P. We must forgive, but we must also be on guard.*

- I. Intro
  - A. Gift from NCDC: magnifying glass - role of Episcopal Advisor is to keep an eye on you!
  - B. This annual convention always comes just before my Fall marathon; running next month in Kansas City with LIFE Runners.
- II. George Weigel sequel to the biography of Blessed Pope John Paul II, *The End and the Beginning*
  - A. Following WWII, shift of territory from Germany to western Poland.
  - B. Polish Bishops to German Bishops: "We forgive, and we ask your forgiveness."
  - C. Outraged response of Polish communist party: "We shall not forgive, we shall not forget."
- III. Tenth anniversary of terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001
  - A. The idea of forgiving the terrorist attackers strikes us as outrageous as Poles forgiving Nazi exterminators.
  - B. But forgiveness is the call of the Gospel.
    - 1. In Jesus' time, the standard was to forgive up to three times.
    - 2. Peter thought he was being generous, more than twice that number.

3. Jesus says even that is not enough.

IV. No one deserves to be forgiven.

A. God is compassionate and merciful and ready to forgive us unendingly.

B. The process does not end with God's unlimited forgiveness.

C. There are reciprocal responsibilities for those of us who have been so graced with God's unending forgiveness.

D. We must be willing to forgive others in the very same way God forgives us.

V. Jesus says that we must be innocent as doves, but clever as snakes.

A. We must be alert to threats to religious freedom:

1. State of Illinois' efforts to force Catholic Charities to do foster care and adoption placements with same-sex couples

2. U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services proposal to force private insurance to provide coverage for contraception, sterilization and abortifacient drugs.

3. Requiring Catholic hospitals to do abortions is a real goal of the pro-abortion forces.

B. We should not be naïve about that. We must be alert to these threats to religious freedom.

VI. Conclusion

A. Jesus' forgiveness of the good thief, known as St. Dismas.

B. Let us sing: "Jesus, remember me, when you come into your kingdom."

May God give us this grace. Amen.