

# Forgiveness

Just as a parent loves a child even when that child misbehaves, so God loves us when we are bad as well as when we are good. We do not try to become good so God will love us. Rather, God loves us so much that we become good. Part of becoming good is taking a close look at ourselves from time to time and then asking God to forgive us, just as we ask our parents for forgiveness when we have disappointed them. This list can help you focus on your own life and suggest reasons why you may want to be forgiven.

1. How do you treat your parents? Are you beginning to understand that they are real people, people with their own joys and sufferings? Do you understand that they need your love and support just as much as you need theirs?
2. How do you act toward those in school with you? Do you try to impress them and even lie to them to make yourself appear more important? Do you ever reject some of your schoolmates because they do not have the right clothes, talk the right way, or belong to the right groups? Are you trying to be friends with everyone, even those no one else likes?
3. How do you act toward adults? Do you listen to what they say and try to understand their wisdom? If they are old and weak, do you try to help them?
4. How do you treat members of the opposite sex? Are you friendly and kind to those who are less popular? Do you ever try to conquer them so you will appear more powerful and popular?
5. How do you act toward God? Is he becoming someone important in your life, someone you think about often and talk to even outside of formal prayer? Do you participate in the liturgy each Sunday with a thankful heart?
6. How do you act toward those who are not like you? Toward people whose skin color is different? Toward people who are poor and forgotten by others? Toward people from other nations? Toward those we call our enemies? Toward those who have harmed us or slighted us?
7. What is your attitude toward things? Do things sometimes become more important than people in your life? Do you ever imagine that by having things you will be more popular and more acceptable to others?

After thinking about these questions, talk to God who loves you so. Ask for his forgiveness and, if you have offended others, make it a point to mend your relationships with them, too.

