

Education Reflection on Reconciliation.

Scripture itself commands believers to seek reconciliation and unity. We are to be reconciled among ourselves and with everyone else. This theme starts in the book of Genesis with our relationship to each other and with the rest of the created world. It continues throughout the Bible as a golden thread that culminates in the life, death and resurrection of Christ. It is a central part of the New Testament Letters and of the vision of peace in Revelation.

In our reading today reconciliation is a common motif in Matthew's Gospel -

If your brother sins against you.

¹⁵ "If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. ¹⁶ But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses. ¹⁷ If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. And if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector. ¹⁸ Truly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. ¹⁹ Again I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything they ask, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. ²⁰ For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them."

Matthew 18:15-20.

We are reminded that how we live out our faith as individuals and as communities is equally important in the eyes of God. At school, we build community through our relationships with each other, with our teachers and guides, and in the work we are required to do. We share our knowledge and learning and we serve each other in times of need and joy. In this way we are reconciled to Jesus and to building up his kingdom on earth.

This reconciling kingdom brings with it a new model of unity: we do not judge anyone by the standards of the world. We are able to see the potential of every person, recognising that each one is loved and called by God. It is so easy to pigeon-hole people, rather than to consider them as sacred and made in God's image, important and gifted, beautiful and blessed with potential.

God shows us what to do through Christ reconciling the world to himself, not holding our weaknesses against us. This is wonderful news. God is always ready to give us another chance. In the same way, may we give others another chance each day.

Questions for further exploration

How best can we show reconciliation in our schools?

Who do we most need to be reconciled to this term?

How can we serve God by reconciling ourselves to each other this week?

Where else at home and in our communities can we model reconciliation?

Can we recognise signs of reconciliation in this world? Where are they? Who models them?

Let us reconcile ourselves to one another in peace, love and truth. May we always seek reconciliation in God's name.

Suggested Music for listening to or singing

Christ be our Light, Bernadette Farrell. 2008.

You have called us, Bernadette Farrell. 1995.

Fleur Dorrell.