

As We Forgive Those
Real Life Catholic Study Series

Episode III

Introduction

This third episode features a testimony from Immaculée Ilibagiza, well-known author of the New York Times best seller *Left to Tell* detailing her horrific experience of the genocide that took place in Rwanda back in the mid-1990's. Immaculée barely escaped death, and upon liberation from her 91-day hiding, discovered that her entire family with the exception of one brother had been brutally murdered. She speaks to the topic of forgiveness like few others can. If you wish to know more about her story, or obtain a copy of her book you can find more information at: <https://www.immaculee.com/>

Short Summary of the Episode

Following her testimony, Immaculée wrestles with Scripture passages like the ones listed below – “love your enemies; pray for those who persecute you.” And while praying the Our Father, she finds herself pausing with the words of the Lord's Prayer, “and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who have trespassed against us.”

“How could I ever forgive those who murdered my entire family?!” she asks. “How is that even possible?” Yet she comes to a place of full surrender to that forgiveness in prayer. She becomes a powerful model for all of us, with whatever we are struggling to forgive, whatever we may be still holding on to.

Key Scripture verses

Matthew 5:43-45: “You have heard it said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.”

Matthew 6:11-12: “Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.”

-Watch third video-

Small Group Discussion Questions

1. Take some time to just reflect on Immaculée's testimony – what in particular stood out to you in what she shared? What moved you the most?

1. When you see her model forgiveness, even for those who have hurt her so deeply, how does her example inspire you to be more forgiving? To let more stuff go?

1. In the areas from your own life that you have identified, in episode 1 and 2, how might God be inviting you to follow Immaculée's example?

As you end this third session, take time to pray again together for the work of grace that only God can provide in this process. Pray again *for* each other. Have each person in the group say a prayer for the person to their right. If everyone has shared more openly what areas they are seeking to forgive, mention those specifically in your prayer, asking for more of God's grace for them to surrender and let go.