

THE LORD'S PRAYER

THE FIFTH PETITION

STORY

Martin de Porres was born in 1579 in Peru. His father was a Spanish nobleman and his mother a black freed-woman. At his birth, his father rejected him as too dark and later abandoned the family, leaving them in poverty.

At age eleven, Martin began working as a servant for the Dominicans, a Catholic order of priests. When he asked to join, they said no. Spanish law would not allow them to admit someone who was illegitimate or of mixed blood. Martin was both.

But nine years later, they were so impressed with his humility and hard work that they accepted him as a Dominican. Brother Martin was in charge of the infirmary, where he cared for the sick. He founded an orphanage, a children's hospital, and an animal shelter.

Martin had a deep love for the poor, providing food, clothing, and medicine. He cared for those ignored by society, reaching out to poor farmhands, blacks, mulattoes (persons of mixed blood), and slaves brought from Africa.

He spent much time in prayer and worship. Never did he lash out at those who had mistreated him, but he showed love and forgiveness to all.

Discuss one-on-one or in small groups the following questions.

1. How was God's power evidenced in Martin's remarkable life? *By God's power, Martin was able to demonstrate a Christlike ability to forgive and serve. He did not let his life become determined or defined by those who abandoned, misused, or demonstrated prejudice against him.*
2. How did Martin find the strength to forgive? *God strengthened his faith through His Word and the Sacraments.*
3. How is the power of God evidenced in a Christian's ability to forgive? *Being able to love and forgive others is a great gift from Him who loves and forgives us.*