

Teresa Forcades i Vila

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WHAT I BELIEVE

I believe, above all, in forgiveness. I believe that our capacity for forgiveness reveals the bare truth of our capacity to love, and I am often surprised to find it in people I don't especially admire and to find it lacking in others I love dearly. More than once I have been surprised by my own difficulties with forgiving, and I have experienced the miracle of being forgiven. It is like being born again. Being born from love. The Gospel tells us that the sinful woman showed great love because so much had been forgiven of her (Lk 7:47). It also warns us that even a person of whom much has been forgiven can treat others meanly and mercilessly (Mt 18:23-35). And this is the second part of what I believe: I believe in freedom; I believe in breaking the causal chain that opens the world to poetry but also to the most unjust arbitrariness. I believe that forgiveness is the greatest act of freedom. This means that anything can be forgiven but nobody can be compelled to forgive. Forgiveness cannot be forced and its outcome cannot be predicted. The woman who forgives her husband for abusing her can decide, even as she forgives him, that they cannot go on living together. God alone can judge the authenticity and the scope of an act of forgiveness. Forgiveness is the most rational of all acts, because it recognizes that something more than automatism rules the world. Forgiveness is the act that allows us to be creators, like God. The act that allows us to start over again. Seventy times seven times.