

Character Week: “Practicing Forgiveness”



Professor Isabel González Sosa introducing the workshop: “Practicing Forgiveness: Learn to Put it into Practice”.

From February 17th to 21st, Francisco de Vitoria University held the Character Week, organized by the Center from Education in Virtues and Values, as an initiative dedicated to encouraging reflection and the comprehensive development of students. As a part of this event, a training session promoted by the Forgiveness Institute took place. The session, titled “Practicing Forgiveness: Learn to put it into practice”, was led by psychologist and university professor Isabel González Sosa and focused on understanding forgiveness from both a psychological and ethical perspective.

The workshop began with a theoretical, approach, addressing topics such as the emotional impact an offense can cause, common responses to such harm, and the personal and social benefits of forgiveness. Additionally, various strategies for cultivating forgiveness were presented, including Everett Worthington’s REACH model and Robert Enright’s forgiveness therapy.

The practical part of the workshop was illustrated through the personal story of Tim Guénard, which gave students a firsthand example of the healing power of forgiveness. This testimony allowed participants to apply their reflections in practice. The exercise was based on an offense of their choosing, helping them evaluate their ability and willingness to forgive while reflecting on how forgiveness plays a role in their daily lives.

One of the most notable aspects of the session was the definition of forgiveness and what it truly means to forgive. Citing leading experts on forgiveness, Isabel explained that forgiveness doesn't mean forgetting the offense or justifying the offender. Instead, it's a conscious decision to let go of resentment and transform pain into an opportunity for personal growth. It was also emphasized that forgiveness is an internal process and doesn't always require reconciliation with the person who caused the harm.

This training highlighted the importance of addressing forgiveness within both academic and personal environments, as practicing forgiveness can help students manage their interpersonal conflicts. Character Week continued throughout the week, with many other activities, promoting a key space for the integral formation of the students, and thus promoting essential values for their personal and professional development.