



This Sunday's Gospel Reading 24th Sunday in Ordinary Time Year C
(Luke 15: 1-10)

Now the tax collectors and sinners were all drawing near to hear him. And the Pharisees and the scribes murmured, saying, "This man receives sinners and eats with them."

So he told them this parable: "What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he has lost one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness, and go after the one which is lost, until he finds it? And when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing. And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and his neighbours, saying to them, `Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost.' Just so, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance. "Or what woman, having ten silver coins, if she loses one coin, does not light a lamp and sweep the house and seek diligently until she finds it? And when she has found it, she calls together her friends and neighbours, saying, `Rejoice with me, for I have found the coin which I had lost.' Just so, I tell you, there is joy before the angels of God over one sinner who repents."

And he said, "There was a man who had two sons; and the younger of them said to his father, `Father, give me the share of property that falls to me.' And he divided his living between them. Not many days later, the younger son gathered all he had and took his journey into a far country, and there he squandered his property in loose living. And when he had spent everything, a great famine arose in that country, and he began to be in want. So he went and joined himself to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him into his fields to feed swine. And he would gladly have fed on the pods that the swine ate; and no one gave him anything. But when he came to himself he said, `How many of my father's hired servants have bread enough and to spare, but I perish here with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and I will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me as one of your hired servants."' And he arose and came to his father. But while he was yet at a distance, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and embraced him and kissed him. And the son said to him, `Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.' But the father said to his servants, `Bring quickly the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet; and bring the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and make merry; for this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found.' And they began to make merry.

"Now his elder son was in the field; and as he came and drew near to the house, he heard music and dancing. And he called one of the servants and asked what this meant. And he said to him, `Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fatted calf, because he has received him safe and sound.' But he was angry and refused to go in. His father came out and entreated him, but he answered his father, `Lo, these many years I have served you, and I never disobeyed your command; yet you never gave me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends. But when this son of yours came, who has devoured your living with harlots, you killed for him the fatted calf!' And he said to him, `Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. It was fitting to make merry and be glad, for this your brother was dead, and is alive; he was lost, and is found.'"

This is the Gospel of the Lord

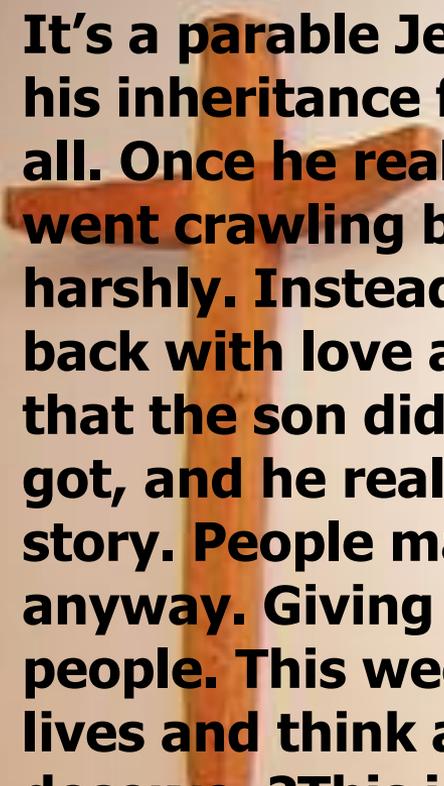


Prayer One

The Sign of the Cross

**Let us remember that everything we do is
In the name of the Father, and of
the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen**

***Reflection: This week's Gospel gives us
a story of forgiveness and gratitude***



This week's Gospel gives us the story of the Prodigal Son. It's a parable Jesus told about a son who took his share of his inheritance from his Father and went away and wasted it all. Once he realised how much things had gone wrong, he went crawling back to his Father, expecting to be treated harshly. Instead, his Father forgave him and welcomed him back with love and joy. You might look at that story and argue that the son didn't deserve the welcome and the forgiveness he got, and he really didn't. In fact, that's the whole point of the story. People may not deserve forgiveness, but we give it anyway. Giving it anyway is what makes us good, loving people. This week, why not take some time to think about your lives and think about what you have that you really DON'T deserve..? This isn't an exercise designed to make you feel guilty, but rather to make you feel grateful and happy. We have been given so many things that we could never possibly have earned. Hopefully, this makes us grateful. Hopefully it also makes us want to treat others with the same love and generosity we have been shown.



Final Prayer

LOVING FATHER...

You created people out of nothing but love and you continue to show us great love. Help us to appreciate all the great things that are done for us, by you and by those around us, and help us to show love ourselves.

**IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER, AND OF THE SON, AND OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.
AMEN.**

Prayer Two

The Sign of the Cross

**Let us remember that everything we do is
In the name of the Father, and of
the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen**

Reflection:

The story of the Prodigal Son which we get in this week's Gospel is a great story about forgiveness and gratitude, but it's also the story of a family



Like most families the family in the parable has some issues!

When we are young, especially, we tend to take our families for granted. We tend to see them as something that's always been there and always will and we don't tend to see them as anything special - probably because we've never really known anything different.

If you stop and think about everything that your family does for you though, and about everything that your family gives you in your life, it's quite overwhelming. Quite humbling.

Why not take some time this week to pray for your family and to let them know how grateful you are for them

Let us also bear in mind that not everybody has a supportive family. Let also keep these people in our prayers this week



Final Prayer

LOVING FATHER...

You create people not to be alone but to live in love and harmony with one another. We thank you for all those who love us and support us.

We ask you today to watch over families everywhere and to help us to appreciate our families more and more.

**IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER, AND OF THE SON, AND OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.
AMEN.**



Prayer Three

The Sign of the Cross

**Let us remember that everything we do is
In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen**

***Reflection:
St. Augustine once said that 'Our hearts are restless until they rest in you, O God!'***





Augustine lived quite a wild life before finding God so he knew what he was talking about. All the things he dived into to try and find meaning and fulfilment ultimately came up empty. Only when he found God did his life seem to him to have a real purpose.

In this week's Gospel, Jesus talks about lost sheep. A really common metaphor. In some ways, we are all a bit lost. We all chase after things that will never really make us happy and we turn away from the things that will really allow our hearts to rest.

This week, take some time to think about the things you chase after that are ultimately empty, and think about the good things that you maybe really should make more time for



Final Prayer

LOVING FATHER...

As we go through this day, help us to see the things that really matter and help us to see the things that really don't. Lead us closer to you until our hearts are resting in you. A rest which reminds us that we are loved and that we were made to do amazing things.

IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER, AND OF THE SON, AND OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. AMEN.

Final Thought...



Never let the things
you WANT
make you forget
the things
you HAVE.

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Next weeks theme: Stewardship