

Scripture and Feast Day Notes

Sunday, February 28, 2021

From Today's Readings

Luke 15: 1-32 Among the instructive parables of losing and finding (sheep, coins), the story of the Prodigal Son tells of a young man who leaves home for what he thinks will be a better life. Defeated by his own selfishness and sin, he returns to his father who joyfully greets him. His obedient older son is sullen – why the party for a prodigal? This is a parable about the nature of God's merciful love and the true rewards of being faithful. *Discuss/reflect: Describe both sons. Why was the older son resentful? What didn't he understand about his own obedience and faithfulness?*

2 Cor. 6:1–7:1 St. Paul humbly shares the character of his ministry, which is a “mixed bag” of good and bad - glory and dishonor, sleepless nights and rejoicing, “having nothing but possessing everything.” He advises believers to strengthen one another in a shared life. *Discuss/reflect: What might it mean for someone to be poor but make others rich, have nothing but possess everything? (v.10)*

Isaiah 54:11-55:13 God will restore Jerusalem to a beauty and value that is described with images of precious jewels; he continues to promise his people all that they require to be satisfied. *Discuss/reflect: Read 55:2 aloud. Reflect. Repeat these verses in your own words. In what do you invest your money and labor that proves ultimately unfulfilling?*

Today is the Sunday of the Prodigal Son



The first two Sundays of our Lenten journey depicted happiness (Paradise) and then loss (the Expulsion). With this week's parable we experience both. Much like Adam and Eve, the younger son in this parable is not happy with what he has. He wishes for the pleasures of a “distant country.” So he leaves his father and his home, descends into suffering and despair and then returns, chastened by the discovery that *he had left behind what was best*. The father reminds the resentful older brother -- as the Father reminds us -- that true

happiness is in living with him daily and that all who return home are joyfully received. It is a cliché that we never appreciate the things we have – good health, meaningful work, loving friends and family – until we lose them. Jesus' parables always transform such simple, well-understood realities into powerful metaphors for God's love. *Reflection: Why do you think Jesus left the story open-ended as to how the older brother responded to his father (vv 31-32)? How would you finish the story?*