



a Kendall Hunt Company

Fourth Sunday of Lent, Year C

Submitted by lectionaryadmin on Mon, 03/04/2013 - 19:00

Lectionary: 33

Read Sunday's Gospel: [Luke 15:1-3, 11-32](#)

Gospel Summary

Today's Gospel is the well-known story of the prodigal son who begged for his share of the family inheritance. He took his fortune to a far away place and quickly spent all he had on his personal pleasures. He was completely broke when a serious famine struck the area and he was forced to tend pigs, an occupation prohibited to Jewish people. As he tended the pigs, he hungered for their scraps and realized that his father's slaves lived better than he did. It was then that he decided to return home, not as a son, but as a hired hand. So happy was the man's father when he saw his son return that he celebrated with all sorts of signs of honor. The father's older son, however, was very displeased with the way his father treated his brother, claiming that he had always been there working like a slave for his father. Never once had the father celebrated with this son. The father explained that the older son had always been with him and obedient. It was cause to rejoice, however, that his other son had been lost but now was found.

Reflection for Families

Parents try to divide the world into equal pieces for each of their children, but they know how very different each child can be. There are really no "one-size-fits-all" sets of expectations for families with more than one child. This Gospel helps us remember that we need to recognize the virtues of obedience and faithfulness, while we still love unconditionally and forgive the child who challenges us. Both brothers in this story considered themselves slaves—a feeling we work hard to prevent in our children.

Bringing the Gospel into Your Family

This parable about the prodigal son is a story about families and filled with emotion. Gather all your loose family photos and organize them into an album. (If you're lucky enough to be up to date, go through your photo albums.) As you arrange the photos, talk about your memory of that picture and the emotions that you associate with its circumstances. When you have finished, decide which emotion most characterizes your family. Are you pleased with this defining emotion or is this a good time to work on some changes?

Discussion Starters

1. One of the most selfish things I remember doing was when I . . . What I learned from this experience was . . .
2. A time when someone welcomed me back occurred when . . .
3. The strongest experience I recall of unconditional love was . . .

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- [Gospel Reflections C](#)



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- [Lent](#)
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