

FAMILY GOSPEL LESSON

Luke 15:11-32

This beautiful parable tells the story of the sins of a son and the unconditional love of a father. God is our Father who loves us unconditionally. Like the prodigal, we so often turn from our Father and we too must come home through humble repentance. Repentance is a turning from sin and turning toward God. It comes from seeing ourselves as we are. Our heavenly Father is eagerly waiting with open arms for us to see and turn from our sins and come home to Him.



Much is often said about the prodigal son and his father in the parable, but an equally important character is the brother. He is much like the Pharisee we read of last week, trying to measure himself by the sins of his brother. This is an easy trap to fall into with all the evil in the world. We say to ourselves, “I am not as bad as this person,” or “At least, I do this.” But as a Father, God loves us all; He knows our hearts and what has been given to us. Therefore, He deals with each of us individually.

For Consideration

- What happens to the prodigal son in this story? What does the word “prodigal” mean?
- How does his father react? How does his brother react? Who do you identify with in this parable and why?
- Why is Jesus telling this parable? What does this Gospel passage

TO DO TOGETHER

Pin the Wings on the Angel

In this game, each family member takes a turn being blindfolded while trying to pin the wings on the angel. (You can play this game with a donkey and tail or whatever works best for your family.) Help the blindfolded person spin around a couple times before he tries to reach the goal. Family members should call out directions most of which are incorrect. After everyone has had a turn, talk about how this is similar to what the prodigal experienced—how he lost his focus and was led to a life of sin.

Modern-day Prodigal

Challenge your family to create a modern-day skit on this parable. Have fun with it; bring out fun costumes, music, and lighting.

Forgive Me

A good habit to begin is asking forgiveness from family members on mornings when you are attending Divine Liturgy. Teach your children to respond to someone that asks for forgiveness by saying, “May God forgive us both.”

CLOSING PRAYER

*Glory to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.
Both now and forever, Amen.*

Be quick to open unto me Your fatherly embrace, for as the prodigal I have wasted my life. In the unfailing wealth of Your mercy, O Savior, reject not my heart in its poverty. For with regret I cry to You, O Lord: Father, I have sinned against heaven and before You.

-from the Matins of the Prodigal Son

FINAL THOUGHT

Enter into the Church and wash away your sins. For here there is a hospital and not a court of law. Do not be ashamed again to enter the Church; be ashamed when you sin, but not when you repent.

-St. John Chrysostom

