

2nd Saturday of the Season of Lent “Who are we in this story?”

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My friends, as you know, we are unable to have daily or Sunday mass for the time being due to the epidemic sweeping our area. These reflections are meant to be a way I can still reach out to you, hopefully offering an insight or two on the readings for the day. The readings for the day can be found at www.usccb.org if you don't have a daily missal handy.

And so, here goes: This morning, the Gospel we are given is the story of the prodigal son. The interesting thing about this parable is that no one is given a proper name. We just have the father in the story, the son in the story and the elder brother. As those who have attended daily mass will remember, whenever we encounter a character in the bible who isn't given a name, this is an ancient rhetorical way of inviting the listener to explore how they may be like that given character. Applied to this story, in our prayer this morning, we can ask ourselves, how am I like the disobedient son who hurtfully leaves his father and family, and wastes his family's money on a life of dissipation? Sometimes I hear about very difficult relationships some people have with their parents and family members, perhaps longing for reconciliation. Perhaps, some of us might feel more like this disobedient son in terms of our relationship with God sometimes too? At any rate, the opportunity to see ourselves in the disobedient son can give us much grace when we consider how much love God will shower upon us if we just return to him with our whole heart?

However, there is another character we might identify with more, the elder son who is a bit impatient with how easily his father forgives his wayward brother. This offers us the opportunity to reflect on the ways we have been overly judgmental of others, perhaps in our own families as well. This got me thinking about our present times: how many more families are spending a lot more time together now that schools have shifted online and parents who find themselves working at home. This can be good at times and perhaps challenging at times. And so, it is good to consider how we might be more like the elder brother is impatient with his family members.

Of course, Jesus want us to also consider how we are called to be more like the father in this story whose love for his son is unconditional and whose ability to forgive is super abundant. And so we can ask ourselves, how are called to be more like the father in this story. And, along with that, we can reflect how blessed we are to learn from Jesus how loving our heavenly father truly is if we just give our hearts to him. Have a great day. God bless you!