



Things to Ponder

- [About the Author](#)
- [Order](#)
- [About the Book](#)
- [Reviews](#)
- [Readers' Comments](#)
- [News & Events](#)
- [A Prayer for the Day](#)
- [Things To Shout Out!](#)
- [Things to Ponder](#)
- [My Favorite Quotes](#)
- [FAQ](#)
- [Contact](#)
- [Home](#)

Fourth Sunday of Lent – March 6, 2016

Dear Parish Family,

One of the most famous parables of the gospels is that which is called prodigal. Who really was the prodigal? Was it not the father, whose love was overwhelming—God the Father of mercies? The two boys in the story both had a problem accepting that love. The younger son was consumed with a lust to live life to the fullest, until he came to his senses among the swine! The elder son, assured as he was of his inheritance, was resentful of the claim of the younger son for the father's affection. Even in his act of repentance, the younger son was moved to return not so much because he had hurt his father, but because he was hungry. His was an imperfect contrition. The younger son also failed to acknowledge the true nature of the father's forgiveness: He said: I no longer deserve to be called your son; but the father proclaimed a feast and announced: ... this son of mine was dead, and has come to life again! So complete is God's forgiveness!

These two sons teach us two very important principles about ourselves and about God's love. First, we cannot really accept God's forgiveness unless and until we forgive ourselves. Secondly, we do not give evidence of having accepted God's love as long as we hold on to hurts. Genuine reconciliation requires these steps, but it also takes time. St. Paul said to the people of Corinth: whoever is in Christ is a new creation. Do we really believe this?

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Rev. Bill Foley

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