

Dear Friends,

Praised be Jesus Christ!

One of my favorite gospels is the Parable of the Prodigal Son. It is one that is quite familiar to many that depicts the generosity of God's love and forgiveness. In it, the younger son demands his inheritance from his father. Essentially the son is saying to his father, "You are dead to me". The son then goes off and squanders all the money left, to eat with the swine, being broke and destitute. The son realizes the grave mistake he has made and vows to return to his father and seek his forgiveness. The parable says, "While he was still a long way off, his father caught sight of him, and was filled with compassion" (Luke 15:20). This is my favorite verse in the entire parable. Why? Because it proves that God is constantly searching for us. The father in the parable is meant to remind us of God the Father. When the son returns home in the parable, the father embraces his son, kisses him, and throws a grand celebration. Notice, he was not at home and his son happened to come through the door. The father saw his son while still a long way off. That means the father went looking. My friends, God is constantly searching for us; we need only to take the initiative to return home.

As we enter the final stages of our Lenten journey, I invite you to avail yourself of the sacrament of reconciliation. We are the prodigal children of God the Father who, in our own sin, have wandered away. When we return home to the confessional, we are met with a rejoicing Father who looks to celebrate with us, not punish us. I know it can be uncomfortable or even scary to confess sins, sometimes I get nervous too. Trust me, whatever fear or anxiety we have around confession comes from Satan. The last thing Satan wants is for us to be reconciled with our Good Father who only wants to see us alive and well. On Wednesday, April 9th the Archdiocese of Milwaukee will be offering 12 hours of reconciliation at parishes throughout the Archdiocese. In our area, St. Matthias will be the host site. For those 12 hours priests of our area, including me, will be available to hear your confession. This event has happened for a few years now, and I can tell you some of the most beautiful experiences I have had in the confessional happened on this day. As St. John Paul II often said, "Be not afraid!". Be not afraid to fall into the loving and forgiving arms of our Father who anxiously awaits our return.

As we journey to meet the Risen Christ, let us be sure to keep each other in prayer during this busy and sacred time of year. What we are about to celebrate, namely the Passion, Death, and Resurrection of Christ, gives meaning to everything. Our life makes no sense without these Sacred Mysteries.

"But now we must celebrate and rejoice, because your brother was dead and has come to life again; he was lost and has been found" (Luke 15:32)

Sincerely Yours in Christ,

Rev. Aaron R. Laskiewicz

Pastor