

## The Father With His Two Sons 3/31/19

I would like to propose for our reflection today, the two words return and restore. Let's see how this plays out in the story of the prodigal son and his angry brother.

We have a younger son who returns with these humble words: "I have sinned against heaven and against you..." He comes back smelling, sick, hungry, wretched and poor. He comes not seeking to be a son anymore but just to be taken as one of the hired hands of his father. He comes to find a father who does not hesitate to embrace him, give him a kiss and put a ring on his finger. He meets a merciful father who restores him to the priceless gift of sonship.

Further, we have the second son, apparently, the more responsible of the two. He returns from his chores angry, envious, proud, unforgiving and unwilling to come home to meet his own brother. He had given the impression all along of being righteous and obedient. He was judgmental and harbored hatred for his brother. He might not have gone to a far distant place like his brother, but surely, he had more work to do in terms of the distance to cover.

Finally, let us look at the portrait of the father. He goes out in both instances to encounter, engage and bring home his sons. His one desire is to restore the broken relationship and to restore an everlasting destiny. He is merciful, forgiving and cares deeply. Now let's consider which represents our own portrait. Are we the younger son who has just made the decision to return and be better than before? Are we the elder son who cannot just let go and is judgmental towards his own brother? Do we share in the benevolent portrait of the father who is so prodigal with his mercy?

Praised be Jesus...Now and forever!