

Lenten Reflection

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Today is my eldest daughter's birthday. Nine years ago today I saw her sweet little face for the first time and my whole life changed. I learned unconditional love in an instant. This little person was a gift from God and every day since, I have been thankful and grateful that He has given me the blessing to be her mother.

In the Gospel today, we read the Parable of the Prodigal Son. We see how the father's love for his son is unconditional, just as the love of God is for all of us. The father waits and watches, day after day, looking for his son to return. When the son finally arrives, the father celebrates the son's return. God does the same for those who have lost their way or have forgotten Him. He is there with open arms for all of us, always. There may be times we face great struggles or hardship or make mistakes, just as the Prodigal Son. However, we have been given the assurance that no matter what we are faced with or what choices we make, that our "kind and merciful" God is always there for us. We need not be afraid.

The other son, who stayed loyal to his father always, and is upset by the celebration of his brother's return, is asked by his father to rejoice for the brother who was lost, but has been found. God wants to see us rejoice at those who return to Him as well, for we are all human, we all make mistakes, yet we are all welcome with God. The First Reading from Micah reminds us about how forgiving and merciful God is: "Who is there like you, the God who removes guilt and pardons sin for the remnant of his inheritance; Who does not persist in anger forever, but delights rather in clemency, And who will again have compassion on us, treading underfoot our guilt? You will cast the depths of the sea all our sins;"

As we continue our journey through Lent, we can be assured that whatever struggles we are dealing with or whatever is weighing heavy on our hearts, our God is there for us. We also have His example, to be forgiving and merciful to those who have done wrong to us. Let us forgive others and our hearts will be lighter, bringing us closer to God.