



# LENT *Faith Conversations*

Week of March 27-April 2

**Sunday Readings:** Joshua 5:9-12; Psalm 34; 2 Corinthians 5:17-21; Luke 15: 1-3, 11-32

## ADULT REFLECTION

**Sunday Readings Summary:** This week's readings are bursting with the goodness of God. A God who not only provides his people with food for the journey (manna), but restores them to their own fruitful land. A God who delivers from fear and shame all those who look to him. A God who reconciles and makes new. A God who considers all that he has as belonging also to us, his children, and celebrates each time we return to him.

Life can be hard. We may wonder where the goodness of God is for us, or feel we've long since lost that "privilege." And yet Jesus brings the truth of *The Prodigal Son* into even the toughest of human realities. All is gift. The Heavenly Father desires goodness and fullness of life for all of us, his children. He *fore-gives*, already holding out all he has to his way-ward children, if only they seek reunion. The love we experience for our own children is a mere reflection of the love God has for each of us.

**For Reflection:** Christian life is a process of ongoing conversion. *In what areas of your life are you like the Prodigal Son: unappreciative and self-absorbed? How are you like the "good son": self-righteous and dissatisfied?* Lay your brokenness before our good God. Do not fear, but trust. God will not condemn, but rather embrace and heal us!

## FAMILY CONVERSATION & PRAYER STARTERS

When you think of *goodness*, who or what do you think of? Is God good? How do we know? (Examples from this Sunday's readings, the goodness of creation—of the gift of life, sunshine, friendship, our own desire for good things and goodness, personal experiences of God's goodness, who Jesus revealed himself to be through stories like the Prodigal Son and his words and actions)

When someone is truly good, we can trust them. Did the two sons in the story of the Prodigal Son trust that their father was good? How did they show this? How can we show our trust in our good God this week? (Thank him daily, turn to him in bad moments, risk being good to others) But a response of *trust* is still lacking something. How can we show our *love* for God?

## PRAYER

Lord, we praise you for your goodness! Stir up within us all the goodness and richness of your Spirit, already dwelling within us. Help us trust that we can always come back to you after failing. Make us ambassadors of your goodness to others. Amen.

## FASTING

Hungry enough for pig food, the prodigal son was finally able to see his relationship with his father clearly. Pick one favorite food or past-time you'll give up this week. When you feel the emptiness, ask God to speak to your heart.

## ALMSGIVING (SHARING WITH THOSE IN NEED)

Jesus was accused of "welcoming sinners and eating with them." Who might you invite to your home for a meal this week (or soon) – to be ministers of God's love and goodness? (Look outside your comfort zone. Ask the Holy Spirit, "who?" A neighbor or acquaintance, someone with whom you don't see eye-to-eye, a colleague who's struggling, a family new to your parish, etc.)



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