**Week of May 17, 2019**

**Luke 15:11-24**

11 And he said, A certain man had two sons: 12 And the younger of them said to his father, Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me. And he divided unto them his living. 13 And not many days after the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living. 14 And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land; and he began to be in want. 15 And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. 16 And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him. 17 And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! 18 I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, 19 And am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants. 20 And he arose and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him. 21 And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son. 22 But the father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet: 23 And bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat, and be merry: 24 For this my son was dead, and is alive again\*; he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry.

**Understanding the Scriptures**

Today’s lesson is coming from the book of Luke in which Jesus told a parable or a spiritual lesson to those around him. According to Deuteronomy 21:17, upon the passing of a father, the oldest son in a family inherited a double portion, or twice as much as any other sons in the family. Because the inheritance was not to be received until the father’s death, the Prodigal Son’s request to receive his inheritance early would have been considered disrespectful.

During the famine, the Prodigal Son, having spent all his money, found himself in a desperate situation. He joined himself to citizens of the country and took a job feeding pigs. Pigs were considered unclean and forbidden to Jews. Pig became a symbol of impurity for the Jews. Eating pork continues to be regarded as a compromise or violation of the Old Testament Law and a sign of unfaithfulness by Jews. Since no one would give the younger son anything to eat he ate the food the pigs ate. To take a job feeding pigs and resorting to eating the pods the pigs ate showed the son’s desperate efforts to survive. Living on his own, having left his father’s home, the younger son came to his senses. This means the son was able to reflect on his mistakes and realize the wrong he had done. He thought about home and how he and taken his father’s love for granted. The son headed home. Although he did not know what kind of reception he would receive, this did not deter him from making the journey home. When the father saw his son approaching, the son was welcomed with love. Jesus used this parable to show that God’s love is all-embracing, unconditional and overflows to the repentant sinner.

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