

Fourth Sunday of Lent

The son who came back

INTRODUCTION

We all know how good we feel when we say "sorry" and make up after a quarrel. Jesus told a story to show that when we forgive and are forgiven, we are filled with great joy and a feeling of peace.

SIGN OF THE CROSS

LIGHT THE CANDLES

Read these words:

The path to our heavenly father is like the rising sun, getting brighter and brighter as we draw closer to God. (Proverbs 4:18-19)

SORRY

God calls us to love each other and to change our hearts if we have been unkind or selfish. He will always forgive us when we are sorry, and expects us to forgive each other. Say together:

Our Father...

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Your word, Lord, is a light for my path, a lamp to guide me closer to you.

GOSPEL (LUKE 15:11-24)

One day Jesus told this story: "There was a man who had two sons. One day the younger one came to his father and said, 'Father, give me everything that will one day belong to me, so I can enjoy my riches now.'

"The father did this, and the younger son set off to look for adventure. He traveled to a distant land and spent all his money enjoying himself. But there was a famine in that land, and the young man found himself penniless and hungry. 'If I stay here I will surely starve,' he thought. So he decided to return to his father and ask for his forgiveness.

"The father saw his son coming and ran to welcome him. As he hugged him, the young man said, 'Father, I am so sorry. I no longer deserve to be called your son.' But his father told his servants to prepare a feast and to bring the finest clothes, and they began to celebrate."

DISCUSSION

The son decided to leave home because he wanted to enjoy himself and to see the world while he was young. At this, his father was very sad. But he loved his son and wanted to make him happy, so he was ready to give him what he asked for and to watch him leave.

The young man thought only of his own needs and happiness. He did not worry about the unhappiness he would cause.

But when he was starving, he realized that he would always be welcomed and cared for at home. When we are having a bad time, we know that we can turn to our families at home for help and support because they love and care for us.

The father was looking out for his son and hoping that one day he would return. He never stopped loving him, and ran to welcome him and show how pleased he was to have him home again.

The son asked his father to forgive him for being foolish and selfish. The father forgave him at once and celebrated his return.

Jesus told this story because he wanted us to understand that whatever we do wrong, we can always come back to our heavenly father. If we ask God for his forgiveness, we know that he will welcome us with open arms. God feels sad and waits patiently for our return whenever we turn away.

In the sacrament of reconciliation, we ask for God's forgiveness and help to become more loving and caring people. Like the son who returned to his father, we are filled with happiness and joy when we make peace with God.

ACTIVITY

Copy the pictures telling the story of the son who came back, and help the children to color the pictures and make them into a booklet.

CREED

CLOSING PRAYER

Lord, you gave your love and peace to us.
Help us to make our world a happier place
by sharing that love and peace
with each other.

'THE SON' 'WHO CAME' 'BACK'

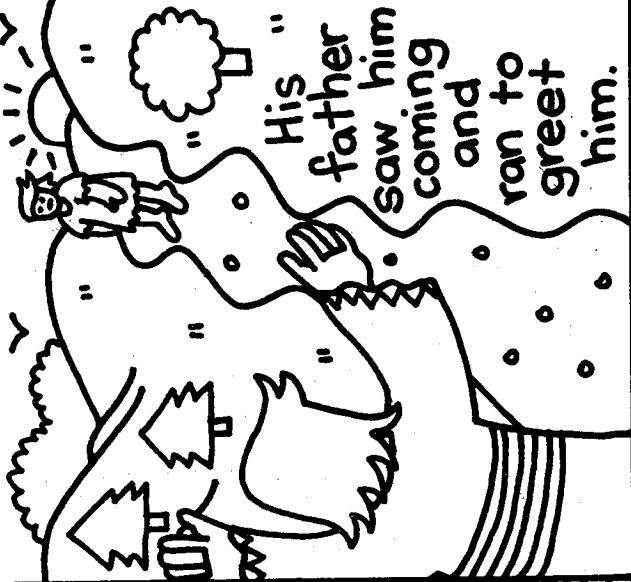
Father, give me what belongs to me.



I will go to my father and say sorry.



The son left and his father was very sad.



His father saw him coming and ran to greet him.



He spent all his money & enjoying himself.

There was great celebration because the son had come back to his father.

