

## Reflection for Saturday 6 March

This morning's Gospel reading is about the Parable of the Prodigal Son from St Luke chapter 15 vs 11-32. The father's younger son decides he wants from his father his share of the estate now rather than later. The father agrees and lets him have it. The lad goes off to a distant country and blows the lot on a life of debauchery. Once the money runs out he is left with nothing. He experiences famine and no food but manages to get a very poorly paid job on a farm feeding pigs.

He then comes to his senses and realizes he would be much better back home with his father and older brother. The boy also realizes his father will be ashamed of the way he has behaved and will ask his father if he would accept him back as a paid servant. He considers himself no longer worthy to be a son of his father. The son is truly repentant of the way he has behaved. So the lad returns home.

The father, on seeing his son in the distance rushes and greets him, puts his arms around him and kisses him. He is so glad his son has returned. The father seems not to hear the son's words asking for his father's forgiveness. Instead the father orders his servants to put the best robe on the boy, indicating the glory of God at work in the situation and to put a ring on the boy's finger. The ring signifies acceptance by the father of the son back into his family. There's the feasting because the boy who had been lost is now found.

Jesus in telling this parable tells that God is love and will always forgive us our sins if we are truly sorry. Then that's how we should behave towards other people. The father is all loving like God and we should be like him and not hold grudges towards others towards others. We should always be ready to forgive others for their wrongs to us.

Now we come to the older son who refuses to join in the celebrations for his younger brother's return. The father pleads for him to join in and be thankful for what has happened. The father says he should be happy and rejoice that his brother has been found. The older brother is peeved at the way his father has treated his younger son because he has always been loyal and the father has never put on a party for him. The father acknowledges all that. But infers that the older son should be more generous towards his brother on his return to the family. It's the son's attitude that is wrong and he should change.

We have to feel sorry for the older son, but Jesus is telling us that we must have a loving heart towards others and be like our loving heavenly Father.