

Reflection for Feast of St Ambrose Br Adams

“It is never the will of your Father in heaven that one of these little ones should be lost.”

Each of us can also see ourselves reflected in the lost sheep. No matter how sinful we see ourselves, we should all be filled with hope when meditating on this parable of the lost sheep, since it reveals God’s immense love for each person, and especially for those most distant from Him. As Pope Francis said: “In Jesus’ vision there are no sheep that are definitively lost, but only sheep that must be found again. We need to understand this well: to God no one is definitively lost. Never! To the last moment, God is searching for us.” And in another place the Pope insists: “God never tires of forgiving us; we are the ones who tire of seeking his mercy. Christ, who told us to forgive one another ‘seventy times seven’ (Mt 18:22) has given us his example: he has forgiven us seventy times seven. Time and time again, he bears us on his shoulders. No one can strip us of the dignity bestowed upon us by this boundless and unfailing love.”

While this parable fills us with hope for our own life, it also challenges us to imitate Jesus’ understanding for others, his diligence in seeking out the one who has distanced himself from God and his joy on recovering him. Jesus asks us to open our hearts to everyone, and not to judge others and remain shut up in our own “pen.”

Knowing that we have been forgiven will make us eager to spread the good news of God’s forgiveness to many others. As a Father of the Church: Saint Gregory of Nyssa says about the shepherd in the parable, “when he finds the lost sheep, he does not punish it or drives it towards the sheepfold with violence; rather he carries it mercifully on his shoulders and reunites it with the

flock.” Thus, we will often share the joy of a new conversion with God and his friends in Heaven.

Matthew 18:12-14

As we remember Saint Ambrose today, I would also like us to remember Bob O’Dell as a child of God, as a son of God. We don’t think often enough of each other as children of God. And if we are children, we are heirs as well: heirs of God and coheirs with Christ, sharing his sufferings so as to share his glory” (Rom 8:16-17) Bob O’Dell, like all of us, is an heir of God. He will inherit from God. “I think that what we suffer in this life can never be compared to the glory, as yet unrevealed, which is waiting for us” (Rom 8:18). That is what he will inherit, the glory of the resurrection.

Amen.