

## Reflection Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> Week Lent 2023

Although we know and call the parable Jesus tells us today the **Prodigal Son**, the wise call this the parable the **Prodigal Father**. When we encounter the Father in seeking forgiveness for our sins, the Father does not look at what we have done. The Father is delighted that we have come back to him for mercy. This is something hard for us to take in.

Tom Christofferson speaks of the father in the parable as a type and symbol of Christ the Father who provides an eager and tender welcome, and who does it even before the son has even opened his mouth. This father has not waited to hear a confession, repentant words, proclamations of regret, and pleas for forgiveness. This father never lets his son beg for the opportunity to become his servant. This son, with faults and errors a plenty (a symbol of each of us?), is received by his father as a son and once again as an heir. Christ as Father likewise cloaks us with his perfect love, bestows forgiveness and mercy hard-won in the Garden of Gethsemane and on the cross of Calvary, upon any indication of reconciliation and any desire to become better.

Can there be any more profound way for God to demonstrate that his love is unqualified, and that when a heart is changed, the past is forgotten and a glorious inheritance unfolds?

We learn that God's love is never lessened because it is equally bestowed. Every recipient of forgiveness is invited to gain all that God has to give. We learn that God's willingness to forgive, God's grace to meet us where we are and lift us toward him, and His mercy and compassion are fully available to every one of us. We learn that God's goodness is without limit, a well that will never run dry!!!