

I LOVE YOU

VISUAL AIDS

- > A crucifix.
- > A ring.
- > Strips of paper which can be joined together to make a chain.
- > Quiet, reflective music.

WELCOME AND PROCLAIM THE GOSPEL

Say/sing together:

**Praise to you, O Christ, our Saviour.
Let us return to God our Father.
Praise to you, O Christ, our Saviour.**

A reading from the Good News given to us by Luke.
Glory to you, Lord.

Jesus told this story:

'Once there was a rich farmer with two sons. The younger son went to his father and said, "Father, the share of the farm that would be mine when you die, I would like it now." The father agreed, and divided the farm. A few days later the younger son left home for a far away country. As long as he had plenty of money, people wanted to be his friends, but soon it was spent and the friends left him.

DISCUSSION

Have the children retell the Gospel story in their own words.

Do they think the younger son behaved well?

How might the father have responded when the son came back home?

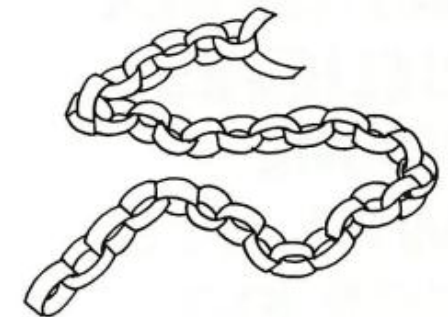
If one of our friends, or a brother, or a sister has hurt us, are we as kind and forgiving as the father in the story?

Show the children the ring. In the story, the father gives the son a ring. A ring has no beginning, no end. It is a symbol of the father's love, and of God's love for us.

SHARING

Have the music playing as the children are arriving, and move straight into the welcome of the Gospel.

In today's Gospel Jesus tells us a most beautiful story of love.



Worse, there was a famine, so soon he was starving. The only work he could find was on a farm feeding pigs. Sitting in the pigsty one day he said, "I'm sitting here starving, while my father's servants have more food than they can eat. I'll go back home and say 'Father, I've sinned. I'm no longer worthy to be your son, but treat me as one of your servants.'" And that is what he did. While he

was still a far way off, his father saw him, ran out, threw his arms around him and kissed him. The son began to say "Father, . . ." but the father called the servants. "Hurry! Bring the best clothes for my son! A ring for his finger, and sandals for his feet! We're going to celebrate because my son has come back to life, was lost and is found." This is the Gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

ACTIVITIES

- > Have the children act out the Gospel story.
- > Give out the strips of paper.
- > On them have the children write or draw how they will share love or forgiveness in the week ahead, and so pass God's love on to others.

- > Link the strips to make a huge ring or chain of love.