

FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT (Laetare Sunday)

Fr Callistus Khathali - HOMILY : FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT (Laetare Sunday)

Luke 15:20

He left the place and went back to his father. While he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was moved with pity. He ran to the boy, clasped him in his arms and kissed him.

The gospel of today (Luke 15:1-3,11-32) is commonly known as the parable of the prodigal son. I prefer calling it the parable of the two sons and their father. Looking at the two sons gives us an opportunity of looking into ourselves and how we relate to our heavenly Father. In many ways we can identify with both sons.

We have the son who left, and the son who remained. The temptation is to think that the one who remained was good, obedient to the father, and never ever lived in sin, while the other son was just bad in every sense of the word. While facing the consequences of his evil, the prodigal son got in touch with how just his father was with his hired servants. As he decided to return home, he had already judged himself and was only going there to be taken as a servant. The son that remained saw himself as a servant who had done so much for the father and none of that was even recognized. As Christians we have a danger of falling into that attitude. We first see ourselves as better, and we dissociate ourselves with those we judge to be evil. At the same time we tend to feel that God does not fully acknowledge all that we do for him.

The attitude of the father is very powerful. His love for both his sons is immense. To the prodigal son, he shows mercy, welcomes him back home and celebrates his return. He is not interested in his request to be taken as a servant. He had not forfeited his birth right of being his son. Even though the prodigal son had finished everything, the father still had more to give. The father's generosity is so immense and can never be measured. To the son who remained the father tells him that all what he has also belongs to him. He reminds him as well that the prodigal son is his brother.

Today we celebrate Laetare Sunday. Our rejoicing is that we have a home. Our heavenly Father teaches us in this parable that he has created a home for us where we all are co-owners of all that he has. The call to repentance from the beginning of Lent was the call to come back home where we are received with mercy, clasped into the Father's arms and kissed lovingly.

***May Almighty God bless you, the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen.
I will meditate on the Glorious Mysteries as I pray for your personal intentions.***

Have a wonderful Sunday.

Fr Callistus