

SUNDAY OF THE PRODIGAL SON

(Luke 15:11-32)

The features that have been mentioned as being characteristic of the previous two Sundays, namely, happiness and its loss, are repeated also by this Sunday. The sole idea of this Sunday is the ascension; man's rise from fall and his return to the place from where he was expelled. This Sunday and the two Sundays following it take their names from the main parables included in the lections of those days.

According to the central parable of this Sunday, the "younger son" of a happy family desires to leave his father's home for a far country. As Adam and Eve, so also this young man was not satisfied with what he had and enjoyed. In other words, this boy does not know and consequently can not appreciate the value of what he owns and therefore he wishes after the pleasures of a "far country".

After some time the Prodigal Son lost almost everything he had – riches, beauty and honor. He had willingly lost the presence of a father and the sweetness of a home. He who had started his expectations to obtain a better life found himself in dire poverty and in the company of swine. All these miseries, however, made it possible for him to find the most important thing, that is, the appreciation of what he had enjoyed previously. Besides being starved the Prodigal Son is now immensely in need of his father's love and is longing for his home. His father's love, which he feels now only in its entire purity, attracts him as does a magnetic force. He desires to be with his father and family – if not even as a "son", at least as a "hired servant". The discovery of the values he has lost, forces him to become roused and forsake the company of the pigs.

The center of gravity of the parable lies in these words: "I will rise and go to my father". These words contain the whole meaning of the Sunday. The rest is a familiar story. The Prodigal Son, restored in his former position and happiness, now is minded of what he possesses, that is, his father's riches. We may say, he has become a steward managing the properties of the family.

Hence, next Sunday contains the parable of the Steward.

