



MOVIMIENTO
LAUDATO SI'
antes Movimiento Católico Mundial por el Clima

MARCH

27

FOURTH
SUNDAY OF
LENT

Eco Gospel

An ecological echo to the Good News of Sunday

This Sunday's Gospel, in the center of Lent, presents us with two sons, one selfish and the other spiteful, and in the center a loving father who never abandons his children. It is up to each one of them, (and of course to ourselves) to recognize recognized, loved and reconciled.

Lk 15,1-3. 11-32

Gospel



CLICK



Then Jesus said, "A man had two sons, and the younger son said to his father, 'Father, give me the share of your estate that should come to me.' So the father divided the property between them. After a few days, the younger son collected all his belongings and set off to a distant country where he squandered his inheritance on a life of dissipation. When he had freely spent everything, a severe famine struck that country, and he found himself in dire need. So he hired himself out to one of the local citizens who sent him to his farm to tend the swine. And he longed to eat his fill of the pods on which the swine fed, but nobody gave him any. Coming to his senses he thought, 'How many of my father's hired workers have more than enough food to eat, but here am I, dying from hunger. I shall get up and go to my father and I shall say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I no longer deserve to be called your son; treat me as you would treat one of your hired workers."' So he got up and went back to his father. While he was still a long way off, his father caught sight of him, and was filled with compassion. He ran to his son, embraced him and kissed him.

His son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you;

I no longer deserve to be called your son.' But his father ordered his servants, 'Quickly bring the finest robe and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Take the fattened calf and slaughter it. Then let us celebrate with a feast, because this son of mine was dead, and has come to life again; he was lost, and has been found.' Then the celebration began. Now the older son had been out in the field and, on his way back, as he neared the house, he heard the sound of music and dancing. He called one of the servants and asked what this might mean. The servant said to him, 'Your brother has returned and your father has slaughtered the fattened calf because he has him back safe and sound.' He became angry, and when he refused to enter the house, his father came out and pleaded with him. He said to his father in reply, 'Look, all these years I served you and not once did I disobey your orders; yet you never gave me even a young goat to feast on with my friends. But when your son returns who swallowed up your property with prostitutes, for him you slaughter the fattened calf.' He said to him, 'My son, you are here with me always; everything I have is yours. But now we must celebrate and rejoice, because your brother was dead and has come to life again; he was lost and has been found.'



Reflection



The parable is well known, it is usually identified with the "parable of the prodigal son". The word "prodigal" in its meaning, refers to a person who squanders or carelessly spends their assets. The text itself is rich in narration and with symbolic depth, which forces us to think about each of the characters mentioned there. Without a doubt, the center of the story is the goodness of the father, of God the Father, whose love is far above our wrong decisions. No wonder some call this story the "parable of the loving father." Having located the central message of this Gospel, we will now refer to the ecological intuition that we discovered, and that can illuminate us in the face of the ecological problem that we are experiencing.

Actually, there is no need to go over and over the text, the problem of "waste" emerges in all its expression and consequences. But let's get down to another detail first. Let us first think of the son who asked for "the fortune", which he considered belonged to him, this allows us to think of the erroneous conception that the Earth and all its wealth belong to us. Here too we have the first believing conviction: "We are not God. The earth precedes us and has been given to us" (LS 67), and as such we have no right to prey on it, to "waste it", rather, before the gift, our attitude must be one of correspondence, of care for what is He has donated and entrusted us.

Secondly, let us bring to our reflection the attitude of "wasting fortune" of the son, who living wildly ends up spending everything until he is in need. The acts have consequences, in this case, we speak of the hunger suffered by the son. We can think of the waste of natural goods, caused by excessive consumerism that also brings social inequality. In this regard, in *Laudato Si'*, it is said: "When people become self-referential and isolate themselves in their own conscience, they increase their voracity. The emptier a person's heart is, the more he needs objects to buy, possess, and consume."

A few years ago, in 1972 more accurately, a group of scientists led by biophysicist and environmental scientist, Donella Meadows, presented a report known as the Limits to Growth Report to the Club of Rome.

The report warns of a collapse caused by an economic, social and moral model based on infinite growth on a planet of finite resources. This report reaches these types of conclusions: "As the material wealth of a population rises, it tends to consume more annual resources per person." "The heart of the matter is not only the survival of the human species, but whether that survival can be maintained without falling into a worthless state of existence."

Thirdly, we want to highlight this Sunday the possibility that we have to change, to convert. The son says, "I will get up, I will set out for my father." It is the attitude of change that we can all have if we want life on our planet to be worthy and possible for all of us who inhabit it. In the aforementioned scientific report, it is also pointed out that "it is obvious that, in order to avoid this collapse, we have to introduce some basic changes in our philosophy of life and in our behavior. And in the encyclical *Laudato Si'* it is expressed: "Hope invites us to recognize that there is always a way out, that we can always redirect the course, that we can always do something to solve problems." (LS 61) And also: "Many things have to reorient their course, but above all humanity needs to change. What is needed is the awareness of a common origin, of mutual belonging and of a future shared by all. This basic awareness would allow the development of new convictions, attitudes and ways of life" (LS 202).

Returning to the central theme of "The parable of the loving Father (prodigal son)". In Creation we discover in great detail this boundless love for everything he has created. Life expressed in multiple and varied forms somehow describes what God's love is like. Faced with this asymmetrical love, it is up to us to take the attitude of repenting and reconciling ourselves with the love of the Creator Father, caring for and protecting his work. Therefore, from these ecological intuitions we can ask ourselves: what specific attitudes and commitments do we want to live?

Canto: Él lo esperaba. Autor: Javier Brú.



Prayer



God the Father, with the depths of mercy, may we not move away from You, nor from your life project. Perhaps by mistake or temptation we have turned away, neglecting your creative work. Give us the confidence that You want us reconciled, with you and in you, with our world, with our brothers and with ourselves. Amen.



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