

# FAMILY NIGHT

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Fourth Sunday in Lent, March 14, 2010



## **Sunday Readings:**

*Exodus 3:1-8a, 13-15*  
*Moses encounters the burning bush.*

*1 Corinthians 10:1-6, 10-12*  
*Beware of self-righteousness.*

*Luke 13:1-9*  
*The fig tree parable tells of God's patience.*

## The Loving Father

### WHAT'S THE POINT?

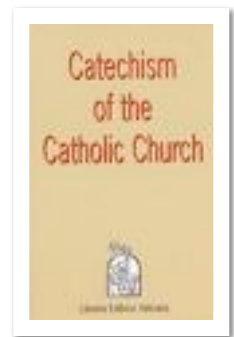
In the parable of the Prodigal Son, we often focus on the younger son and how he squanders his inheritance, but we must not overlook the important message that Jesus is giving here. The loving Father extends his mercy to his wayward son and receives him with great rejoicing upon his return. We can be encouraged that if we turn our hearts to God, he meets us joyfully and with abundant mercy. The father does not reproach his son, rather he gives him gifts and throws a party. No matter what we have done, we can turn to our Father in heaven and receive his abundant mercy.

Opening Prayer: Our Father or Act of Faith

## Family Activity

1. Use a game like "Candyland" or "Chutes and Ladders" and pretend the game pieces are the prodigal son trying to get back to the Loving Father.
2. Let each family member take a turn leaving the room as the prodigal son. When each person returns, greet him/her with joyful hugs and offer them food or some small prize.

## *Catechism Connection*



No. 545 “(Jesus) shows (sinners) in word and deed his Father’s boundless mercy for them and the vast ‘joy in heaven over one sinner who repents.’”



What did the father give to his lost son when he returned?



## *Saintly Examples*

St. John Bosco

St. John Bosco was born to a peasant family in 1815. At age nine he had a dream about his future vocation as a priest to help poor boys. As a youth he taught catechism to other boys and encouraged them to attend Mass. At sixteen he entered seminary and then finished his studies in Turin. He took in homeless boys and trained them in trades and in grammar classes. Eventually he founded the order of Salesians and trained men to continue in his work. He also built many churches in Italy. He was a supreme example of a loving father to the many ruffian boys he trained over the years. He died in 1888.

## *Let's Talk About It*

### Discussion Questions

1. How have you been a “prodigal son” toward God?
2. How does Lent relate to the parable of the Prodigal Son?
3. How does God show his love and mercy to us?
4. How do you see God reflected in your own father or in your priest?

## *Family Commitment*

(Fill in your commitment here)



### *Snack*

Raw pea pods dipped in ranch dressing. This reminds us of the pods the prodigal son desired to eat.

### *Closing Prayer*

Loving Redeemer through your passion, teach me self-denial, strengthen me against evil and adversity and so make me ready to celebrate your Resurrection. Amen.

### *Quiz Answer*

Robe, ring and shoes. (Luke 15:22)

