

WHAT IF....

Read Luke 15:11-32

4th Sunday of Lent, March 11, 2018

The prodigal son left home and took his inheritance to a far away land. His parents are left at home wondering if he is safe, healthy and is he ever going to return home. Jesus says the prodigal son wasted his wealth and used up all of his resources just as a famine hit the far away land. It was so bad that the only job he could find was feeding pigs and his pay was to get to eat what the pigs did not eat.

Today, when we go into town we see prodigal sons and daughters everywhere. They may not have traveled hundreds of miles and we may actually know them, but they are truly living in a "far away land." Their addiction to opioids has cut them off from their home and community and now they wonder around town like strangers.

Today as you fast, pray, listen and respond ask God to show you what our response should be for these strangers in a strange land. Should we feed them or ignore them? Should we provide a warm place to sleep or chase them off to another town? It is true they are dirty, they are an eye sore, they can be scary, they are wasting all that their parents and God have given them. However, they are someone's child and more than that, they are a child of God, just like you and me. Ask God to help you look past their appearance and see a lost child who have parents and a God who is also worried about them. What should the church's response be to the child whose only hope is what the pigs don't eat?

If your child was lost in a far-away land how would you want them to be treated by a local church?

It is not enough for us to open our church doors and hope the strangers in a strange land sober up, clean up and come in. We must follow God out of our sanctuaries and feed the hungry, clothe the naked, heal the sick and welcome the stranger.

Prayer: Dear God, show us how to help this situation. Amen.

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