



HOMILY by Father Robbie Low

4th Sunday of Lent-Year C-March 27th 2022

Readings: Joshua 5: 9-12, Psalm 33, 2 Corinthians 5: 17-21,

Luke 15: 1-3, 11-32

We all know the story of the Prodigal Son inside out and back to front so I thought it might be illuminating to take a different angle. This is the story glimpsed from the letters to an agony aunt. For younger listeners and readers, Marje (Proops) was the first famous British Agony Aunt. I have borrowed her memory and, I hope, not traduced her pithy wisdom.

Dear Marje,

Thanks for your advice. You were so right. There was me, in fear and trembling, thinking that the old man would have written me out of the book of life and never have me back after wasting his fortune, but NO. Before I can make my pitch (sorry and all that), he's all over me like a rash. Showered, best bib and tucker, fatted calf on the rotisserie, 'champers' all round. Amazing. Of course this has gone down like a lead balloon with poor old unimaginative bro. who is in full sulk mode. Any thoughts on what next?

Yours

Prodigal

Dear Prodigal,

You are a lucky boy. Covered in dung, you've come up smelling of roses. Your Pa may be a soft touch but your brother, understandably, is hacked off. After all he's kept the show on the road while you have been merrily 'p...ing it up against a wall' in Tinseltown. Suggest you apologise to him too and start putting a decent shift in.

Marje

Dear
Marje,

My feckless brother, who almost ruined the estate, has just pitched up filthy, penniless and claiming to be sorry. My father has fallen for it hook, line and sinker. Mr Wastrel, now done up like a Christmas tree, and suddenly it's party time here at the ranch. I've kept this show on the road and never had so much as a 'Go Large Big Mac' from the old man. I am speechless with rage. Advice?

Wounded

Dear
Wounded,

Completely understand BUT....would you rather your idiot brother was dead or a slave or never seen again? He has accepted that he has been a complete pillock and you must accept his apology or you will be permanently damaged by resentment and lose your relationship with your dad. Everyone on the estate knows that it's all down to you.

Relax.

Marje

Dear
Marje,

A few years back, one of my sons took his share of the estate and went abroad. Long story short.....epic debauch.....bankruptcy.....living in squalor. Pitches up, bemerded, gaunt, full of apology etc etc. I, of course, absolutely thrilled.....hugs....tears....celebration etc. Other son absolutely furious...not speaking. Advise urgently please.

The Pardoning Papa

Dear PP,

First....you give a kid a fortune and you are surprised that he blows it? You have no idea of the effect this has, over the years, on your faithful son. You then add insult to injury by your emotional incontinence appearing to confirm your misplaced favouritism. You are clearly not the sharpest knife in the box. Suggest you make a big fuss of your loyal son and, in future, leave the big decisions to your wife.

Marje

Spiritual exercise:

Compose a letter to someone whose love and service you have taken for granted and send it.