

## Closing prayer

Together:  
Lord,  
you have shown us a perfect love.  
Let your Holy Spirit guide us  
and help us to recognise when we  
need to forgive and seek forgiveness.  
Grant this through Christ our Lord.  
Amen.

## Stewardship link

It is never too late to become a good steward. The elder brother appears to have been a faithful steward but he too is challenged to be truly generous and forgiving. The younger brother had to lose everything he had in order to recognise and appreciate his greatest blessing.

## To do

Spend time each day reviewing your actions and thanking God for his unconditional love.

However busy you are this week, make time to show others that they matter and are valued.

This week, seek to appreciate all the things that you have and celebrate the achievements of others. In your home, parish, workplace and with your family, friends and colleagues, recognise when you need to be sorry and when you need to forgive.

*Take some time to note your responses in your notebook.*

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# Diocese of Portsmouth Stewardship Reflection 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Lent Year C

‘Your brother here was dead  
and has come to life.’

(Luke 15:32)

## Opening prayer

Leader: Let us pray  
for a greater faith and love.

Response:  
**Father of peace,  
we are joyful in your Word,  
your Son Jesus Christ,  
who reconciles us to you.  
Let us hasten toward Easter  
with the eagerness of faith  
and love.**

(Opening Prayer for Fourth Sunday of  
Lent)



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## To share

What insights have you had in the last week? Is there something in your notebook that you would like to share with others in the group?

## To listen

Luke 15:1-3,11-32

## To think about

As one of the best known parables of Jesus, it is easy to think that the narrative has little more to offer than a simple story of ingratitude.

How far do you agree with the following statements?

God gives us free will. We live with the consequences.

God considers us his children, his family; a good parent will always forgive and love.

The older son's envy prevents him from seeing the treasure he already has. We too don't always recognise the treasure and gifts God has given us.

Those who are good should not resent those who are forgiven.

We are called to be loving and forgiving even when people have been rejecting, unappreciative, greedy and foolish.

We are invited not only to forgive, but to embrace the lost sheep and welcome them home generously.

Some people have to hit rock bottom before they come to their senses.

We do not have to earn God's love.

## To reflect on

When and how have you been like one of the characters in this story:

The Pharisee – who belittles the generosity and forgiveness of others?

The envious brother – who resents the fuss made of a newcomer or someone he judges to be unworthy of forgiveness?

The son – who needs to find his correct direction and ask forgiveness or be reconciled to those he has hurt?

The loving adult – who chooses to trust someone who has previously shown a lack of respect and love; or embraces someone considered to have made bad choices?

## To discuss

What kind of Father is God to us?

What can we learn from this parable about forgiveness and forgiving?

How hard is it to forgive and be reconciled in our own relationships?

What have you found the hardest challenge: forgiving or seeking forgiveness?

Do we make demands and expect others to earn our love?

