

**It is only right we should celebrate and rejoice.  
Your brother was dead and has come to life;  
he was lost and is found.**

(Luke 15:32)



March is always dominated by the great season of Lent, a time of prayer, fasting and almsgiving in which we are called to examine ourselves, repent and turn to God. Sometimes we associate Lent with ‘giving things up’. But it is also a time of insight, of invitation. In the gift of seeing our own weaknesses, we are more able to see God working in others, despite their failings. Just like us, they are weak but trying their best. Just like us, they fail time after time. Just like us, they need help from God. Most of all, they are just like us.

**To read**      Luke 15:1-32 and John 8:1-11

**To reflect on**

During Lent we hear the story of the woman accused of adultery and of the prodigal son. In one the accusers are called to reflect on their own natures and to forgive. In the other, the one who has been faithful is called to go further; to forgive, to accept and even to celebrate the one who has repented. How easy is it to acknowledge our own weakness as a gift? How difficult is it to accept the gift of forgiveness, or to give the gift to others whose failings we know?

**To do**

Any group of people, e.g. a family, a community, a workplace, is full of conflict and love at the same time. Often the pain in conflict is great because we know the other person so well and they know us. Take time to reflect on one gift and one weakness of someone close to you: a child, a spouse, a friend, a colleague. Now reflect on one gift and one weakness in yourself. Is it easier to forgive them now you have reflected on yourself? Which was easier to forgive, their weakness or their gift? Is it possible to celebrate all that they are, and all that you are? Bring your reflection to the Sacrament of Reconciliation this Lent.