

THIS WEEK'S SCRIPTURES

September 15, 2019

Twenty-Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Exodus 32:7-11, 13-14 † 1 Timothy 1:12-17 † Luke 15:1-32

Reflection by: Sister Pat Crowley, OP



Love God above all things. Then you can love everything and everyone else as they deserve. In the first reading God is very angry. The people have become depraved. They are worshiping a molten calf, made with their own hands. After all they have been through, all that was done for them. Moses has to, it seems, calm God down! He reminds God of all the good folks that have gone before, as if God had to be reminded, and his promise to love and protect them no matter what. God gives in and changes his mind.

Paul in his letter to Timothy reminisces that he was once a blasphemer. He has been forgiven and will continue to share his story as a reminder of God's love and forgiveness.

Then we come to the story in Luke of the Prodigal Son. The story of the father-son split and sibling rivalry. Parables are delightful to ponder, so many possible interpretations. For whom are they written? Who does Jesus direct the teaching or impact? Some will be delighted and comforted; others angry and disturbed. "The immense joy in welcoming back the lost son hides the immense sorrow that has gone before. Leaving home is a denial of the spiritual reality that I belong to God with every part of my being. Home is therefore the center of my being where I can hear the voice that says: You are my Beloved, on you my favor rests." (Henri J. M. Nouwen, *The Return of the Prodigal Son: A Story of Homecoming*)

Are these parables to us: a pain in the neck or a comfort to the heart?