



**Five Important Spiritual Thoughts from the Liturgy of the Word  
...and follow up for the Secular Franciscan  
March 9 – March 15**

**1 – The parable of the landowner who planted a vineyard.** (Mt 21:33-46)

...We are part of those who killed the son to get what they wanted. Do we let our selfishness control us?

**2 – The parable of the Forgiving Father (Prodigal Son).** (Lk 15:1-3,11-32)

**OUR FORGIVING FATHER**

+ The Gospel is the very familiar story of the Prodigal Son or a more positive way of saying it, the Forgiving Father

- the story has a number of points specifically for adult spirituality:

+ 1 – the younger man squandered his inheritance

- we sin, we make mistakes

- it is a familiar theme of Lent

- something that comes up in the readings all the time: we

really are sinners, we think thoughts that are not at all Christian, we say words that should not be said, we do things that should not be done

+ 2 – the younger man comes to his senses

- the pivotal point for the younger son

- and what must happen if our spiritual lives are to grow—we

have to come to our senses, some conversion experience

- in which we finally understand that we have to make God

more a part of our lives, more than God is now

+ 3 – the father was watching for his son/ran/no reluctance on his part at all (this is not the way a father would act in the Hebrew tradition)

- this is the kind of God we have

- if we show the slightest sign of coming to our senses, some

type of conversion, God is there and will remain with us

- this is so generous on God's part, "generous to a fault"

- an image so foreign to people who do not understand

God

- the father running to embrace his son, you and me

+ 4 – the older son was angry

- human beings are not always going to agree with how generous God

is because we are so selfish

SHAPING THE FRANCISCAN FOOTPRINT  
by Father Mike Scully OFM Cap., Regional Spiritual Assistant



- we do not rejoice with another's good fortune (the Hebrew religious leaders did not miss this reference)
  - we want what we want
  - again the selfishness thought that comes up so often in these Scriptures is present
- + 5 – but the father is also generous to the older son
  - he goes to him, he begs him
    - we who are so selfish—the Lord keeps pursuing us, hoping that we will come to our senses as well
- + 6 – Jesus leaves the story unfinished
  - maybe leading us to believe that the selfishness could not be overcome
    - the sin which is not forgiven most is selfishness because such a one finds it hard to come to his/her senses

**3 – “The woman left her water jar.”** (Jn 4:28)

...because there were more important things in her life. What is the most important thing in my life right now? What should it be?

**4 – “They rose up, drove him out of the town.”** (Lk 4:28)

...I obviously do not reject Jesus, but which of his teachings should I listen to more?

**5 – “How often must I forgive him? As many as seven times?” Jesus answered, “I say to you, not seven times but seventy-seven times.”** (Mt 18:21-22)

...Is there anyone I am not forgiving?