

Saturday 2nd of Lent

Gospel text (Lk 15,1-3.11-32): Tax collectors and sinners were seeking the company of Jesus, all of them eager to hear what He had to say. But the Pharisees and the scribes frowned at this, muttering: «This man welcomes sinners and eats with them». So Jesus told them this parable: «There was a man with two sons. The younger said to his father: ‘Give me my share of the estate’. So the father divided his property between them. Some days later, the younger son gathered all his belongings and started off for a distant land where he squandered his wealth in loose living. Having spent everything, he was hard pressed when a severe famine broke out in that land (...).

»Finally coming to his senses, he said: ‘How many of my father's hired men have food to spare, and here I am starving to death! I will get up and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against God and before you. I no longer deserve to be called your son. Treat me then as one of your hired servants’. With that thought in mind he set off for his father's house. He was still a long way off when his father caught sight of him. His father was so deeply moved with compassion that he ran out to meet him, threw his arms around his neck and kissed him (...)».

Implicit Christology in the "Parable of the Prodigal Son"

EDITORIAL TEAM evangeli.net (based on texts by Benedict XVI)

(Città del Vaticano, Vatican)

Today we read, perhaps, the most beautiful of Jesus' parables. It has three

protagonists: the two brothers (the "prodigal" son and the son who remained at home) and the good father. At that time, Jesus Christ, was really before two "brothers": tax collectors and sinners, on one hand; Pharisees and scribes, on the other. With His words, Jesus justified His goodness and His welcome to sinners.

Even more so: Jesus Christ justifies His goodness toward sinners with the behavior of the father in the parable. By the way he acts, then, Jesus himself becomes the revelation of He who He called His "father". How did God show His merciful love for sinners? In that "while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom 5.8). Jesus cannot enter into the narrative framework of the parable because He lives in identification with the Heavenly Father, and bases His conduct on the Father's.

—O Jesus! It is in the figure of the father, that I see you placed in the heart of the parable, as the concrete realization of the father's action.