

I keep a calendar on my computer of all the things I need to do every day. I also print a copy of that calendar for the staff in the office — so they can remind me of the things I'm supposed to do ... especially when I get caught up in daily events.

It's easy to forget things ... often I find myself remembering something I forgot to do just in time for it to have been too late to do it.

I have countless paper calendars in drawers or boxes ... usually from previous years ... usually filled out for a couple of days, weeks, or months. And then tossed aside only to be found a year or more later.

Other times, I'll forget something ... like my cellphone, or else something that I'm supposed to drop off somewhere ... and remember it when I'm half-way there.

In school, we study in hopes of remembering what we need to know for tests. In the military, I would study aircraft, ships; base locations; orders of battle ... safety information, fire prevention information, life-saving information.

Countless things to remember ... some of them stay with us seemingly forever ... others disappear as soon as we've taken a test (or maybe even just before.)

Today's Gospel is the well-known "Parable of the Prodigal Son." The story is so familiar to us that it may after time go in one ear and out the other.

But the parable is one of forgetting and remembering.

The younger son, living at home with his father and brother decides he wants his half of the inheritance and is given it by the father.

He goes off and wastes it ... until he is living in squalor ... wishing he could eat pig-food.

At this point in the parable, Scripture tells us that he "came to his senses."

He remembered how well even the servants back home had it ... and looking at his own situation, decided that since he'd probably screwed up things as his father's SON, that maybe he could have some of it back by being his father's SLAVE.

His plan includes three things: (1) he will get up, (2) he will go, (3) and he will say ...

He returns home, and before he can say anything, his father (1) runs to him, (2) embraces him, (3) and kisses him.

As the son begins his bargaining, the father interrupts him and gives him (1) the finest robe, (2) a ring on his finger, (3) and sandals on his feet.

At this point, the younger son falls out of the story; and we hear now about the older son ... who learns that his brother has come home.

Instead of sharing his father's JOY, the older son grows angry ... and refuses to join the party. When his father comes out to speak with him, he chews his father out.

You see: both sons had forgotten who they really were.

The younger son tried to get while the getting was good, and ran off with his share of the estate, and blows it. But is willing to come back as a SLAVE.

The older son spends his time at home working like a SLAVE, resenting his own father, and just tolerating things until he can get his share.

Both sons are fixated on what they can get in the future ... and both sons have forgotten that all of it is already theirs ... and both sons are perfectly OK with being SLAVES.

In the same sense, we forget our own positions in the Divine household. We go about our lives, losing parts of our inheritance along the way through temptation and sin. And all the while settle for SLAVERY to sin instead of our birthright as SONS and DAUGHTERS of God.

When we forget who we are in Christ, we too need to "come to our senses" and (1) get up, and (2) go to the Father, (3) and say whatever it is that is holding us down ... holding us back from WHO WE ARE IN CHRIST.

In the parable, the father NEVER FORGOT HIS LOVE FOR HIS SONS. In reality, true reality, God NEVER FORGETS HIS LOVE FOR US. We may forget ... we often forget who we are in Christ ... and in forgetting we usually accept something far short of our full inheritance as God's DAUGHTERS and SONS.

GOD FORGETS OUR SINS, BUT NEVER FORGETS HIS LOVE FOR US.

As we approach this altar to receive the Sacred Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ ... let us pray to REMEMBER ... WHO WE ARE IN CHRIST ... and what it is that God has promised us IN CHRIST.

And then, whatever our circumstances ... we need to do our part to get up, go, and say what we need to say to regain our full inheritance as SONS and DAUGHTERS of God the Father, redeemed in Christ, and filled with the manifold gifts of the Holy Spirit.