Please read along when the Liturgist reads the Scripture.

**Luke 15:32**

**32** “‘But we had to celebrate and rejoice, because this brother of yours was dead and has come to life; he was lost and has been found.’”

To understand this scripture, we must understand the story behind it.

This is Jesus’ parable of *The Prodigal Son*. In the parable, a father has two sons. The younger son asks for his portion of inheritance from his father, who grants the son’s request. This son, however, is prodigal (wasteful and extravagant) and squanders his fortune in a far away country. Eventually he has none of his fortune remaining and has to work for another farmer feeding pigs. He realizes that he has sinned against God and his own father. So, he returns home empty-handed and intends to beg his father to accept him back as a servant.

Much to his surprise, his father welcomes him back with great joy. Before he can admit to having sinned against God and his father, the father calls for his servants to dress his son in a fine robe, a ring, and sandals and to prepare a celebration in his son’s honor. The older son, who has stayed at home and worked hard, is angry at this and refuses to participate in the celebration. The father tells the older son, “But we had to celebrate and rejoice, because this brother of yours was dead and has come to life; he was lost and has been found.”

What can we learn from this parable? Parents often do not forget their children who live a wasteful and meaningless life. Just as God does not forget those who squander their lives. He gives them time to reform and repent and return home to a joyful greeting and celebration. We, too, must rejoice when a “lost” family member returns home and celebrate their return to life with us.