



Cathedral Basilica of Our Lady of Peace

Cathedral of the Honolulu Diocese • Founded 1843 • National Historic Register

Fourth Sunday of Lent

March 30, 2025

Beloved Pilgrims of Hope,

Greetings of peace, love, joy and hope!

“Embraced by Mercy: A Journey of Redemption and Love”

On this Fourth Sunday of Lent, we are invited to reflect on one of the most touching and powerful parables that Jesus shared with His disciples and listeners: the Parable of the Prodigal Son. This story, often titled as such, tells of a son who squandered his inheritance on reckless living and vices. The goodness he received from his father was repaid with a life of temporary gratification and meaningless pursuits, leading him to a state of desolation and self-realization. He no longer saw himself worthy of being called his father's son and sought to be treated as a servant.

When the son decided to return to his father, he was met with an unexpected and overwhelming welcome. His father embraced him with love and mercy, celebrating his return with a grand feast, a ring on his finger, and a party fit for royalty. In his humility and shame, the son confessed, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you.” Yet, the father's love was so profound that he did not even need to utter words of forgiveness; his actions spoke volumes of acceptance, love, and kindness. Who could be such a father? Who possesses the ability to show such overwhelming kindness to a wayward child?

This parable reveals to us the nature of our God—a loving and merciful Father who awaits each of us with open arms. God continuously calls us into His embrace, full of mercy and compassion. The key to experiencing this divine welcome lies in our awareness and willingness to change. Human weakness often leads us away from God, but like the father in the parable, God is always at the door of His mercy, ready to forgive and transform our lives.

The embodiment of this unconditional love is made even more real when He sent His Son, Jesus, into the world and was handed over to death. Such love can draw our minds and hearts to a changed life and lead us to live in a manner of being called sons and daughters of a Loving, Merciful Father. Drawn to this profound thought gives us the hope to live a better life, focus on Jesus, and turn away from our sinful path.

Let this season of Lent guide us deeply back to Him, restoring our dignity as sons and daughters of God.

Your fellow pilgrim in hope,

Fr. Pascual