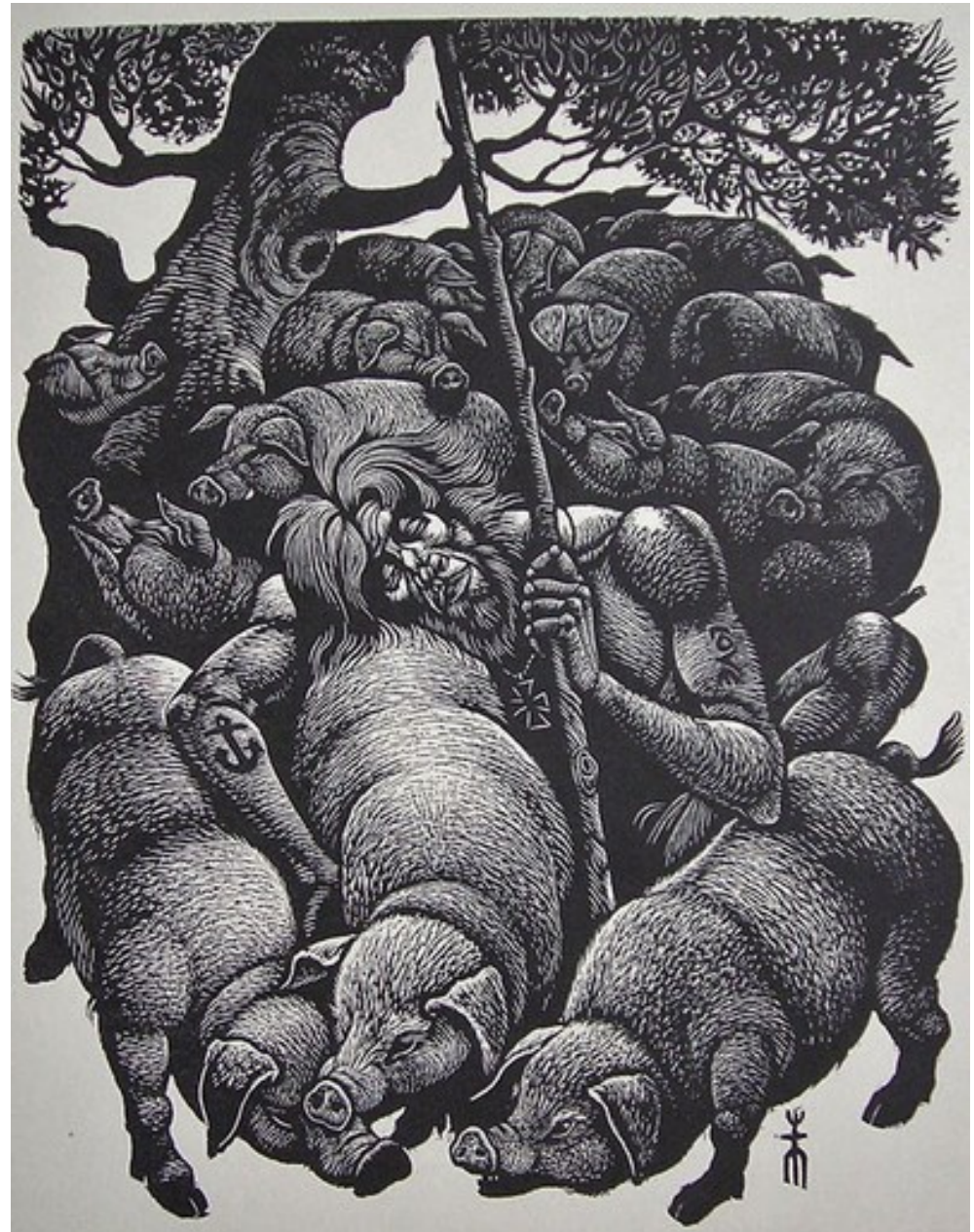


"He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything."

- Luke 15:16



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Go Deeper . . .

Use these questions for further study individually or in a small group

Read Luke 15:11-24 paying special attention to the story of the younger son.

The writer Henri Nouwen reflects on the story of the younger son saying: “Yet over and over again I have left home. I have fled the hands of blessing and run off to far away places searching for love! This is the great tragedy of my life and the lives of so many I meet on my journey.” (Return of the Prodigal Son pg.39)

Where have you “fled the hands of blessing” and run off looking for love in and from the world? What false loves did you settle for?

Where have you, like the younger son, sought “freedom” from God?
What did you find?

The younger son wanted privilege without responsibility. Are there places in your life where you have asserted your rights without accepting the corresponding responsibility, or sought your own good at the expense of others in your family or community? What would repentance look like for you?

The Father is characterized by compassion, care, and forgiveness. Where in your life is God inviting you to experience his unending forgiveness and love anew?

Engaging the Story through Art and Prayer:

Use the engraving on the other side to enter into Jesus’ parable in a new way. Begin in prayer and dedicate this time to Jesus, asking for his Holy Spirit to be present and to guide your heart, soul, and mind.

Spend a few minutes sitting with the picture. What do you notice? What attracts you? What repels you? Why? Notice how you relate to the man in the picture. Now notice how you relate to the pigs. What emotions are evoked by each? What does it stir in your heart?

Sit in prayer and listen. What, if anything, might God be inviting you to notice about yourself or about God? Is there any other invitation from the Spirit?

Close your time by thanking God for his great love and compassion.

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