

There are many kinds of waiting: waiting for a red light to change to green; waiting on the phone after we are put on hold; waiting for test results from the doctor.

In today's Gospel we have what is commonly called the Parable of the Prodigal Son. It could also be called the Parable of the Waiting Father. In this parable, Jesus wants us to know that God is always waiting for us in love.

God waits with love when we wander, leave or turn our back on God's abundant blessings. God waits with love when we sin; when we become hard-hearted; when we are indifferent to the needs of others. God waits with love when we do our thing rather than God's will; when we seek vengeance rather than forgiveness; when we choose strife rather than understanding.

God dearly wants us, Jesus relates, and is willing to respect our choices, our readiness and our freedom.

Even though it may at times seem that God doesn't care, Jesus assures us that God does care.

That's why the Waiting Father looks for his son, runs to him, embraces him and kisses him. That's why the Waiting Father has the finest robe put on his son and a ring placed on his finger and sandals slipped onto his feet. That's why the Waiting Father throws a party, orders a celebration and creates a feast. The son for whom the Father waited with love has returned.

This week pay attention to our experiences of waiting for an other or others. See if we can be patient, compassionate and understanding; see if we can be accepting, kind and gracious in our waiting.

My sisters and brothers, when we have such experiences in our waiting, we have an insight into the kind of love God has for us.

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