

Week One

Luke 15:11ff

The Poster

- A seemingly insignificant encounter.
- I was dead tired, anxious, lonely, restless, and very needy, a vulnerable little child who wanted to crawl onto its mother's lap and cry.
- L' Arc he communities - At the heart of L'Arche communities are relationships between people with and without intellectual disabilities.

The Painting

- A trip to the Soviet Union. The original had been acquired in 1766 by Catherine the Great for the Hermitage in Saint Petersburg.
- Sitting there, I realized that the light became fuller and more intense in the afternoon.
- They seemed surprised and even perplexed by my spiritual observations and reflections.
- I looked into his eyes under the Russian cap, a man like myself: afraid, but with a great desire to be forgiven. From his face came a very gentle smile, and the two of us felt safe.

The Event

- I had become more aware of the four figures, two women and two men, who stood around the luminous space where the father welcomed his returning son. Their way of looking leaves you wondering how they think or feel about what they are watching.
- Are these bystanders, or observers, Control.
- University to Community ... Daybreak, Linda, a beautiful young woman with Down's syndrome, put her arms around me and said: "Welcome."

The Vision

- The painting that contained not only the heart of the story that God wants to tell me, but also the heart of the story that I want to tell to God and God's people. All of the Gospel is there. All of my life is there. All of the lives of my friends is there.
- Window to the Kingdom of God. One could call it the "prophetic" vision: looking at people and world through the eyes of God.

Introduction

- My experience of being the younger son.... I wonder if you are not more the elder son.
- My jealousy, anger, touchiness, doggedness and sullenness, and subtle self-righteousness.
- Whether you are the younger or the elder son, you are called to become the father.
- We need you to be a father who can claim for himself the authority of true compassion.
- Rembrandt was willing to put himself in the father's place; why not I?
- I will first reflect upon the younger son, then the elder son, and upon the father. I am the younger son; I am the elder son; and I am on my way to becoming the father. And for you who will make this spiritual journey with me, I hope and pray that you too will discover within yourselves not only the lost children of God, but also the compassionate mother and father that is God.