

## WE BELIEVE

### God calls us to be close to him.


Through our Baptism each of us is called to become more like Jesus. We are called to follow the example of Jesus, who always remained close to God his Father.

When we think, speak, and act as Jesus did, we become more like him. Yet, sometimes we do not follow Jesus' example. Instead of moving closer to God, we move farther away from him.

Once Jesus told this story about a father and a son.

"A man had two sons, and the younger son said to his father, 'Father, give me the share of your estate that should come to me.' . . . When he had freely spent everything, a severe famine struck that country, and he found himself in dire need. . . . Coming to his senses he thought, 'How many of my father's hired workers have more than enough food to eat, but here am I, dying from hunger. I shall get up and go to my father and I shall say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I no longer deserve to be called your son; treat me as you would treat one of your hired workers."' So he got up and went back to his father. While he was still a long way off, his father caught sight of him, and was filled with compassion. He ran to his son, embraced him and kissed him." (Luke 15:11-12, 14, 17-20)

Jesus told this story to remind us that God is our loving Father. When we forget his love or turn away from it, God is always ready to welcome us back as his children.

 List some words you would use to describe the father and the son in the story Jesus told.

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How is God like the father in the story? How are we sometimes like the son in the story?




### God gives us the gift of conscience.

God loves each of us and wants to share his life with us. He wants us to be close to him. If at times our choices lead us away from God, he calls us back to him. He calls us to turn away from sin and to live a life of goodness and love.

How do we know whether the things we do are good or sinful? To help us, God has given us a conscience. Our **conscience** is the ability to know the difference between good and evil, right and wrong. It is like an inner voice that helps us to choose good over evil.

Conscience works in three ways:

- It works *before* we make decisions. It helps us know what is good. It helps us consider the results of our choices.
- It works *while* we are making the decision. It brings about feelings of peace or discomfort depending on the choices we have made.
- It works *after* we make decisions. It enables us to judge, as good or evil, the decisions we have made.

 How would our world be different if no one had a conscience?

**Key Word**

**conscience** (p. 259)

