

## The Lost Son prayer & reflection space activities

*These activities were created by the Akeman Benefice team, based on the Parable of the Prodigal or Lost Son.*

*As the activities are based around the children having a knowledge of the story of the Lost Son, it would be advisable to have a whole school collective worship based on that theme before the prayer space.*

During your time within the Prayer and Reflection Space the chances are that you will, at some point, have to explain one or more of the prayer and reflection activities. At each activity, there will be a short instruction card which explains the purpose of the activity. The text for these instruction cards has been included below so that you will have an idea of the different activities before you arrive. Please do not feel that you have to learn these, though!

During each session, you will be stationed at a particular prayer and reflection zone. As each group is directed towards you by the Prayer and Reflection Space leader, you will need to welcome them (ask their names) and encourage them to explore the activity. Depending on the age and ability of the students you may need to explain the activity to them again or help them by scribing their response to an activity. We would always encourage the Prayer and Reflection Space volunteers to interact with students as much as they think is necessary. Some students may want to quietly explore the activity by themselves, whilst others may be happy to just chat with you for the whole time, it is important that they are made to feel welcome in doing either. When talking with the students please use the language '**Many Christians believe...**' or '**As a Christian I believe...**'. **Do not** pray with individual students or do any kind of corporate group prayer.

### 1) The Lost Son – Greed & Need

*There was a man who had two sons. The younger one said to his father. 'Father, give me my share of the estate.' So, he divided his property between them.*

*Not long after that, the younger son got together all that he had, set off for a distant country and there squandered all his wealth in wild living.*

The son is greedy, demanding money and not thinking about others. There are many places in this world where people are sad, hungry, hurt or homeless, and sometimes it is because other people have been greedy.

Think about somewhere in the world that needs help.

**While you think about that place, put a candle on it to think about those people in that place. You might like to ask God to help those people.**

### 2) The Lost Son – Being Sorry

*After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need. So, he went out and hired himself to a citizen of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed pigs. He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no-one gave him anything.*

*When he came to his senses, he said, 'How many of my father's hired men have food to spare, and here I am starving to death! I will set out and go back to my father and say to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be your son; make me like one of your hired men.' So, he got up and went to his father.*

The son is sorry for going his own way and decides to go back to his Father. We too need to turn away from the things we do wrong, such as being greedy and selfish with our toys and games or saying unkind things.

Christians believe that our Father God will forgive us when we are sorry.

**Pick up a handful of smelly animal food and think about something you are sorry about. Put it back into the bowl, and then, as you wash your hands, you can feel better that you have a new start and, if you'd like to, say a thank you prayer that God forgives us.**

### **3) The Lost Son – Forgiveness**

*But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him.*

*The son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.'*

The Father has been looking out for his son, and he welcomes him back and forgives him.

Christians believe that God forgives us when we get things wrong.

How does it feel to be forgiven?

**Think about someone you need to forgive. Or you could think about someone who is kind and forgiving to you.**

**Make a playdough model of the person you thought of. And if you'd like to you can thank God for that person or that God forgives us.**

### **4) The Lost Son – Being Generous**

*But the father said to his servants, 'Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let's have a feast and celebrate. For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.' So, they began to celebrate.*

The father generously gave a party for his son to welcome him home and shared his best robe and ring.

How can we be generous to those around us and share the good things that we have?

**Think of something that you have that you could share with your friends and family (it does not have to be something physical; it could be spending time or being kind). Or think of something that you could do to be generous to someone.**

**Use the glitter pens to draw or write the things you could share onto the bunting, or you could decorate it too. Add it to the string with everyone else's.**

*Italicised bible text from Luke 15: 11-32 from the Adventure Bible (NIV)*