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September 11, 2022 | Twenty-fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Ex 32:7-11, 13-14 | 1 Tm 1:12-17 | Lk 15:1-32 or Lk 15:1-10

Written by  
THE  
FAITHFUL  
DISCIPLE

## **GROW** AS A DISCIPLE | PRAY, STUDY, ENGAGE, SERVE

I think I lose more things than the average person. Car keys. That magic security card that gets me into my office. My son's birth certificate (the night before the driver's test). And my wedding ring, more often than I care to admit. I can't rest until I find them. Oh, the elation when the missing item turns up! So this is one parable I think I "get." Of course, these items pale in comparison to our value as human beings – sons and daughters of God. Even – or perhaps especially – us sinners. As Jesus tells us, "There will be rejoicing among the angels of God over one sinner who repents." What good news for all of us! Rather than wallow in our failures or close ourselves off to God, we are challenged to follow Paul's example and turn to God for our strength – we can turn to him knowing we are loved, valued, and cherished.

**ENGAGE** At Sunday Mass, make a point of welcoming newcomers and strangers with a smile or greeting. Consider getting involved in a parish ministry.

## **GO** EVANGELIZE

### PRAYER, INVITATION, WITNESS, ACCOMPANIMENT

I confess I sometimes feel unworthy to become very active in my parish. I've made more mistakes than I can count; so, no, I'll pass on volunteering to be a lector or a catechist. That's a job for the "good Catholics." As we see time and again in Scripture, ours is a Church of sinners. As was the case with Paul, "once a blasphemer and a persecutor and arrogant," the Lord has mercy upon us, and his grace is abundant. Just as he considered Paul trustworthy to lead the Church, he trusts us; we need only trust ourselves. Gaining our strength from God, we can share our gifts through ministry and service. What's more, we can actively reach out to those on the fringes of our parish or those who have left the Church feeling as though they don't belong. Jesus reminds us that all are welcome at his table.