

**Fourth Sunday of Lent (A) March 14, 2010**

- A. Whenever we sing “The Servant Song” here at Res ...I keep adding an adjective to the lyrics ... not audible, but interiorly**

**“We are pilgrims on the journey,  
we are travels on the road,  
we are here to help each other  
walk the mind and bear the load.”**

- **the adjective I add is “struggling”**
- **we are “struggling” pilgrims on the journey ... without exemption**

- B. Gospel story – powerful**

- **the father struggles: how to maintain unity in the family**
- **the younger son struggles: how to be forgiven / how to come home**
- **the older son struggles: felt unfairly treated / would not celebrate**

- C. What are our struggles – Gerald O’Collins, a theologian speaks of four evils that are on the road of life: the evil of alienation / death / ignorance / absence of the good.**

- D. Our struggles**

- 1. Struggle between unity and alienation**

- **alienation: ruptured relationship / separation / breakdown of oneness**
- **word here is sin: sinned against his father / sin of bitterness – resentment**
- **call: St. Paul: reconciliation: ambassadors of God’s mercy & forgiveness**

- 2. Struggle between life and death**

- **struggle with sickness, losses, oppression, war, bondage**
- **moral issues: abortion, euthanasia, capital punishment, suicide bombing**
- **Jesus: came to bring life ... life to the full ...**
- **call: to be life-givers ... bear fruit that will last**

- 3. Struggle between truth and ignorance (Emily Dickinson’s “Tell all the Truth. . .”**

- **false beliefs ... absurdity ... error ... searching for the truth**
- **younger son: happiness found in money and a life of license ... wrong**
- **call: to seek the truth: happiness lies in returning to God what God has given us ... reciprocity of giving (Hans Urs von Balthasar)**

- 4. Struggle between goodness and evil**

- **danger: not doing the good deed ... the works of mercy ... omission**
- **“The loving person responds.” ... Fromm**
- **call: widen the skirts of goodness ... random acts of kindness**

- C. We are pilgrims ... our journey is long ... we struggle ... we ask for God’s grace and commit ourselves to help each other walk the mile and bear the load.**