



DIOCESE OF SCRANTON

# ROOTED IN CHRIST

LENT 2022



**FORGIVING** *Friday*

Be on your guard! If your  
brother sins, rebuke him; and  
if he repents, forgive him.

Luke 17:3

*forgive*



*Forgiving Others Who Seek Forgiveness*

**Be on your guard! *If your brother sins, rebuke him; and if he repents, forgive him.***  
Luke 17:3

The church is empty. Once again, I come to Saturday morning confession times, and nobody is here. My thoughts wander from "Thank God for the quiet time to catch up on my prayers," to wondering, "Well, I guess there are no sinners in my parish!" I am tempted, cynically, to think that so many people just don't bother anymore with confession, or church in general. Confession and church are not really relevant to people's lives anymore.

Then, a person walks in. The person could be young or old, single or married, divorced or widowed. He or she is desperate to be there and to find a priest. It's been 3 years or 30 years since their last confession. I welcome them gladly, as I try to do every time. The person pours their heart out. He or she leaves with more than relief from bearing a great burden. They leave having encountered Jesus' infinite mercy. They are renewed and revived in knowing the love of God our Father, and their true identity as a child of God.

I then may move on, preparing my weekend homily or looking at what's next in my schedule. If I reflect at the end of that day, as I try to each day (but sometimes not), I can be grateful for simply being present. Even if it was just one person, it made all the difference in the world for him or her. It's not me – it's Jesus. I can marvel and be grateful for what I get to see and share.



Rembrandt, The Return of the Prodigal Son. The State Hermitage Museum/Google Art Project



**Father Greg Reichlen** was ordained in 2008. He is the pastor at the Church of St John in East Stroudsburg, an evangelizing community that welcomes all people. An avid learner, Fr. Greg has a degrees in Music, Biology, Philosophy, and Theology. He also holds a Licentiate in Sacred Scripture (S.S.L.) from the Pontifical Biblical Institute in Rome.

Funding for this initiative provided by your support of the Diocese of Scranton's Diocesan Annual Appeal. Thank you for your generosity!

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2021 **DIOCESAN**  
ANNUAL APPEAL 