

Lost and Found

Today's readings give witness that God has a heart for losers. God reconciles with the idol-worshiping people of Israel. The risen Lord calls the violent, blasphemous persecutor, Paul. The faithful shepherd rescues the wandering sheep and carries it home. The woman who lost one of her ten silver coins searches for it until she finds it. Similarly, God doesn't abandon people even when people abandon God. The cross and resurrection testify to God's faithfulness in that regard. God rescues strays one by one, making the first move to find the lost and create new hearts in them. When (in the first reading) Moses holds God to promises already made in the covenant, the breathtaking picture emerges of a God so committed to relationship that God is influenced—changed—by what people need and ask. This faithfulness of God, shared with overflowing grace in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus, is patient, forgiving, energetic, and ready to celebrate. Take the bread and cup—Jesus hosts the worshiping assembly again this week to welcome sinners and eat with them! Suddenly, “sinner” is no longer the best name for us. Try “guest,” “graced,” “gifted,” “loved,” and “empowered.” Then it's time to follow Jesus out of the gathered assembly and into the world as apprentice sleuths for missing persons, bent on finding the lost and the broken and giving them an invitation to come home.

