

# Companions IN PRAYER



Sisters of St. Clare  
Saginaw, MI

## *The Lost Coin* (Lk 15:8-10)

Do you remember how frustrated you were the last time you misplaced something? For example, I often misplace my keys. I know where they belong, but they are not always there when I want them. I start a frantic search in my house. I call out to everyone, "Have you seen my keys?" I'm usually certain that someone else has moved them. Surely I am not guilty of misplacing them. I insist that all join in the hunt. There is no peace in our house until the keys are found.

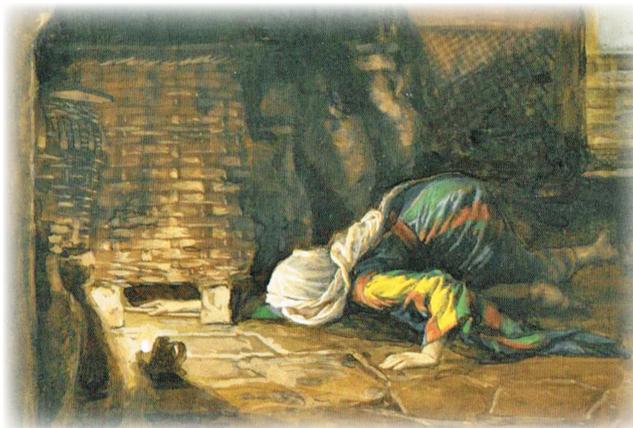
In our Gospel lesson for today, we hear stories of things lost. I want to look at the account of the woman who had ten silver coins and loses one of them. She begins a careful search for the lost coin. Why is this one coin so important to her? Some writers suggest that the lost coin might have been part of a bridal headdress given to her by her husband's family. If so, the headdress would be a symbol of her acceptance into her husband's family, and of her husband's love for her. To lose something of this importance would cause her to panic. She lights the lamp, gets the broom and begins to sweep and search. She needs to find this coin to restore her marriage headdress and to restore her reputation with her family and her husband.

In modern times, I have seen this frustration when a woman loses her wedding ring. Yes, it can be replaced, but it's not the original one. She wants the original one blessed at the wedding ceremony!

Why is Jesus telling this very intimate and precious story of a woman's loss? He is responding to the Pharisees who accuse him of welcoming sinners and

eating with them. The Pharisees see themselves as closer to God because they keep the practices of the law whereas the sinners did not. Jesus is telling the Pharisees that God loves the sinners. The lost coin becomes a symbol of the sinner who has gone astray.

God is imaged as feminine in this story. As this woman will do whatever it takes to find the lost coin, so will God do whatever it takes to find the lost sinner.



*The Lost Coin* by James Tissot

The key to understanding this parable is that WE are the "lost coin," and God is searching for us. God searches for us not because we are good like the Pharisees, but because we often go astray. God does not hold our weakness against us. God is searching, looking, waiting, and wanting us back, wanting us to be found so that we may be healed and whole again.

In our scripture, when the woman finds the lost coin, she calls her friends together and says, "Rejoice with me." In the same way, I believe that when we sinners, like the lost coin, are found, all heaven breaks forth in celebration. I believe that the angels of God rejoice. I see God dancing for joy! I imagine God's arms are open welcoming us all saying, "I knew we would find each other! You belong here. You are home. Welcome."

Now that is the Good News Jesus brings us!

(We are interested in your thoughts. Let us know at:  
<http://srsclare.com/about-us/companions-in-prayer-newsletter>)

*Sr. Laura and Sisters*

(Given for a Mission Appeal in Reese, MI for the Sisters of St. Clare, 2013)