

Luke 15:1-3, 11-32

At that time: The tax collectors and sinners were all drawing near to hear Jesus. And the Pharisees and the scribes grumbled, saying, 'This man receives sinners and eats with them.' So he told them this parable: 'There was a man who had two sons. And the younger of them said to his father, "Father, give me the share of property that is coming to me." And he divided his property between them. Not many days later, the younger son gathered all he had and took a journey into a far country, and there he squandered his property in reckless living. And when he had spent everything, a severe famine arose in that country, and he began to be in need. So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him into his fields to feed pigs. And he was longing to be fed with the pods that the pigs ate, and no one gave him anything. 'But when he came to himself, he said, "How many of my father's hired servants have more than enough bread, but I perish here with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and I will say to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Treat me as one of your hired servants.' " 'And he arose and came to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and felt compassion, and ran and embraced him and kissed him. And the son said to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son." But the father said to his servants, "Bring quickly the best robe, and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet. And bring the fattened calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate. For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found." And they began to celebrate.

'Now his older son was in the field, and as he came and drew near to the house, he heard music and dancing. And he called one of the servants and asked what these things meant. And he said to him, "Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fattened calf, because he has received him back safe and sound." But he was angry and refused to go in. His father came out and entreated him, but he answered his father, "Look, these many years I have served you, and I never disobeyed your command, yet you never gave me a young goat, that I might celebrate with my friends. But when this son of yours came, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fattened calf for him!" And he said to him, "Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. It was fitting to celebrate and be glad, for this your brother was dead, and is alive; he was lost, and is found." '

Fourth Sunday of Lent

Yr. C

30th March 2025

Your brother was dead, and is alive; he was lost, and is found



All the readings for today, the 4th Sunday of Lent, have a common theme which is reconciliation. Each of the readings reminds us that God is always waiting for each one of us to return to Him so we can receive the abundance of life which He freely offers to each one of us. The first reading tells of how the Israelites celebrated Passover on the plains of Jericho. In the second reading Paul invites us to be reconciled to God. And in the Gospel, Jesus tells the parable of the prodigal son, which is sometimes called the parable of the forgiving father. Today's reading invite me to ask myself:

- *Is there an area in my life that I need to ask for God's forgiveness?*
- *Is there someone whom I need to forgive?*
- *Is there someone I need to accept forgiveness from?*

Collect

O God, who through your Word reconcile the human race to yourself in a wonderful way, grant, we pray, that with prompt devotion and eager faith the Christian people may hasten toward the solemn celebrations to come.

Joshua 5:9, 10-12

In those days: The LORD said to Joshua, 'Today I have rolled away the reproach of Egypt from you.' While the people of Israel were encamped at Gilgal, they kept the Passover on the fourteenth day of the month in the evening on the plains of Jericho. And the day after the Passover, on that very day, they ate of the produce of the land, unleavened cakes and parched grain. And the manna ceased the day after they ate of the produce of the land. And there was no longer manna for the people of Israel, but they ate of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year.

In the first reading we hear how the Israelites travelled for forty years in the desert. And now at last, they arrived at the Promised Land, not any more under the leadership of Moses, who had died, but of Joshua. They celebrated their first Passover in the Promised Land. Reconciliation is always a celebration of homecoming.

Psalm 34(33):2-3. 4-5. 6-7.

I will bless the LORD at all times, praise of him is always in my mouth. In the LORD my soul shall make its boast; the humble shall hear and be glad.

Glorify the LORD with me; together let us praise his name. I sought the LORD, and he answered me; from all my terrors he set me free.

Look towards him and be radiant; let your faces not be abashed. This lowly one called; the LORD heard, and rescued him from all his distress.

(Gospel Reflection)

The parable Jesus tells us today is unique to the Gospel of Luke. Jesus has been teaching the crowds as He journeys to Jerusalem. As He teaches, the Pharisees and scribes complain and challenge Jesus because He is welcoming sinners at His table. Today we hear the third of three parables that Jesus tells in response to His critics. These three familiar parables, the lost sheep, the lost coin, and today's parable of the prodigal son, invites each one of us to consider the depth of God's mercy and love for each one of us.

2 Corinthians 5:17-21

Brothers and Sisters: If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ; God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ: be reconciled to God. For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

St Paul speaks of the new creation made possible by Christ's suffering and death. Through this sacrifice, God has reconciled humanity to God's self, and our faults are forgiven. Because of this, we ourselves are then called to share the good news of forgiveness with others. God offers us a new world of forgiveness and reconciliation. Now we are invited to bring that reconciliation to all.

Gospel Acclamation

Praise and honour to you, Lord Jesus. I will arise and go to my father, and I will say to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you'.

Praise and honour to you, Lord Jesus.

Prayer over the Offerings

We place before you with joy these offerings, which bring eternal remedy, O Lord, praying that we may both faithfully revere them and present them to you, as is fitting, for the salvation of all the world.

Prayer after Communion

O God, who enlighten everyone who comes into this world, illuminate our hearts, we pray, with the splendour of your grace, that we may always ponder what is worthy and pleasing to your majesty and love you in all sincerity.