



Liturgy Cycle C

Fourth Sunday Of Lent

The Prodigal Son

Introduction

In today's Gospel, we will hear once more Christ's famous story of the prodigal son. Prodigal means wasteful. We are all wasteful where God's grace is concerned. We misuse his gifts to us. We squander life's opportunities. Let us pause to call to mind our failings. (Pause). Fortunately God is prodigal with his forgiveness. So we turn to him with confidence that he will forgive us once more.

Lord Jesus, you came to reconcile us to one another and to the Father.
Lord, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you heal the wounds of sin and division.
Christ, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you intercede for us with your Father.
Lord, have mercy.

First Reading (Joshua 5:9-12)

The Israelites, free at last from the humiliation they suffered in Egypt, enter the land of promise. Possession of the land becomes a reality when they eat of the produce of Canaan.

Second Reading (2 Cor. 5:17-21)

The whole aim of Christ's mission was to bring about a reconciliation between God and humanity. It is the task of the Church to bring the benefits won by Christ to all people.

Gospel (Luke 15:1-3, 11-32)

This contains Christ's immortal parable – the prodigal son.

Prayer Of The Faithful

Let us pray that we may learn the lessons of this wonderful parable and put them into practice in the daily living of our faith.

R: Lord, hear our prayer.

In his misery the prodigal son knew that his father's door was always open. That all Christians may be generous in forgiving those who have hurt or disappointed them. Let us pray to the Lord.

R: Lord, hear our prayer.

For all the members of our society: that they may rid themselves of the utterly selfish attitude of the younger son who demanded his rights without the slightest thought for his responsibilities. Let us pray to the Lord.

R: Lord, hear our prayer.



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For all parents: that they may be able to create homes in which their children will know that they are loved unconditionally. Let us pray to the Lord.

R: Lord, hear our prayer.

That we may all rise above the small and begrudging attitude of the older brother who had learned so little of his father's love and understanding. Let us pray to the Lord.

R: Lord, hear our prayer.

Let us pray:

Heavenly Father, your door is always open to us; your light is always on for us; your hand is always stretched out towards us. Help us to remember this if we should go astray in life. Help us to return to you confident that you will welcome us, for Jesus your Son told us so. We make all our prayers through the same Christ our Lord.

Communion Reflection

The prodigal girl.

**Great poets have sung the beauties of home,
its comfort, its love and its joys;
how back to the place of its sheltering dome
I welcome the prodigal boy.**

**They picture his father with pardoning smile
and glittering robes to unfurl:
but none of the poets thought it worthwhile
to sing of the prodigal girl.**

**The prodigal son can resume his old place
as leader of fashion's mad whirl,
with never a hint of his former disgrace —
not so for the prodigal girl!**

**The girl may come back to the home she had left
but nothing is ever the same:
the shadow still lingers o'er the dear ones bereft,
society scoffs at her name.**

**Perhaps that is why when the prodigal girl
gets lost on life's devious track:
she thinks of the lips that will scornfully curl,
and hasn't the heart to come back.**

**Yes, welcome, the prodigal son to his place;
kill the calf, fill the free-flowing bowl but shut not the door
on his frail sister's face, remember, she too has a soul.**