



31 March 2019

4th Sunday of Lent / Laetare Sunday

Year C

A Heart That Is Always Ready to Welcome Us Back

Conversion from a life of sin is a long journey back to the home which the sinner left in the deceitful attempt to assert his/her freedom against all rules. Often, the sinner has to reach the bottom of deprivation and alienation, before he/she realizes the loss incurred, and feels the urge to break away from that self-inflicted slavery.

Though in different degrees, we all belong to the broad category labelled "sinners." But the realization of our miserable situation would only lead us to despair if, deep in our hearts, we did not feel sure that God is a loving Father who is still willing to forgive us.

Today Jesus reminds us that God, indeed, is a merciful Father who is not only ready to accept us back in His house, but even runs to embrace us as we journey back to Him. This is what He does in every Eucharist, the splendid banquet He has prepared to celebrate our return to Him.



INTRODUCTORY RITES



Entrance Antiphon

(To be recited only when no Entrance Hymn is sung.)

Rejoice, Jerusalem, and all who love her. Be joyful, all who were in mourning; exult and be satisfied at her consoling breast.

Greeting

P—Blessed be God, the loving Father who is always ready to welcome those who return to Him. May His love and peace be with you all!

All—And with your spirit!

Penitential Act

P—With gratitude to the Lord for his constant readiness to forgive us, let us pause for a moment and realize how much we need his forgiveness. *(Pause)*

All—I confess to almighty God and to you, my brothers and sisters, that I have greatly sinned, in my thoughts and in my words, in what I have done and in what I have failed to do, *(strike your breast)* through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault. Therefore I ask blessed Mary ever-Virgin, all the Angels and Saints, and you, my brothers and sisters, to pray for me to the Lord our God.

P—May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life.

All—Amen!

P—Lord, have mercy!

All—Lord, have mercy!

P—Christ, have mercy!

All—Christ, have mercy!

P—Lord, have mercy!

All—Lord, have mercy!

Collect (Opening Prayer)

P—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.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

All—Amen!

LITURGY OF THE WORD



1st Reading *Jos 5:9a.10-12*

The celebration of the first Passover in the Promised Land was a memorable event because it showed that the Lord had fulfilled the promise He had made to Moses to bring the Israelites to "a land flow-

ing with milk and honey.” It was now time for them to live as “People of the Promise” by honoring their terms of the Covenant.

R –A proclamation from the Book of Joshua

The Lord said to Joshua, “Today I have removed the reproach of Egypt from you.”

While the Israelites were encamped at *Gilgal* on the plains of Jericho, they celebrated the *Passover* on the evening of the fourteenth of the month. On the day after the Passover, they ate of the produce of the land in the form of unleavened cakes and parched grain. On that same day after the Passover on which they ate of the produce of the land, the *manna* ceased. No longer was there manna for the Israelites, who that year ate of the yield of the land of Canaan.

The Word of the Lord!
All—Thanks be to God!

Responsorial Psalm Ps 34

R –Taste and see the goodness of the Lord!

R. M. Velez

Taste and see the goodness
of the Lord!

* I will bless the Lord at all times; his praise shall be ever in my mouth. Let my soul glory in the Lord; the lowly will hear me and be glad. **R.**

* Glorify the Lord with me, let us together extol his name. I sought the Lord, and he answered me and delivered me from all my fears. **R.**

* Look to him that you may be radiant with joy, and your faces may not blush with shame. When the poor one called out, the Lord heard, and

from all his distress he saved him. **R.**

2nd Reading 2 Cor 5:17-21

In the passage we are about to hear, St. Paul emphasizes God’s initiative in the work of reconciliation; the vicarious role of Christ in the expiation of sins; and the instrumental role of the apostles in making reconciliation available to all.

R –A proclamation from the Second Letter of Paul to the Corinthians

Brothers and sisters:

Whoever is in Christ is a new creation: the old things have passed away; behold, new things have come.

And all this is from God, who has reconciled us to himself through Christ and given us the ministry of reconciliation, namely, God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting their trespasses against them and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation.

So we are ambassadors for Christ, as if God were appealing through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.

For our sake he made him to be sin who did not know sin, so that we might become the righteousness of God in him.

The Word of the Lord!
All—Thanks be to God!

Verse before the Gospel

All—(Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, King of endless glory!)

I will get up and go to my Father and shall say to him: “Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you.”

(Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, King of endless glory!)

Gospel Lk 15:1-3.11-32

Jesus’ teaching on God’s merciful love is vividly dramatized in the parable of “The

Forgiving Father” – a parable that is also, to a great extent, the story of our life.

P –The Lord be with you!
All—And with your spirit!

P –A proclamation from the holy Gospel according to Luke

All—Glory to you, O Lord!

Tax collectors and sinners were all drawing near to listen to Jesus, but the Pharisees and scribes began to complain, saying, “This man welcomes sinners and eats with them.”

So to them, Jesus addressed this parable:

“A man had two sons, and the younger son said to his father, ‘Father, give me the share of your estate that should come to me.’ So the father divided the property between them. After a few days, the younger son collected all his belongings and set off to a distant country where he squandered his inheritance on a life of dissipation.

When he had freely spent everything, a severe famine struck that country, and he found himself in dire need. So he hired himself out to one of the local citizens who sent him to his farm to tend the swine. And he longed to eat his fill of the pods on which the swine fed, but nobody gave him any.

Coming to his senses, he thought, ‘How many of my father’s hired workers have more than enough food to eat, but here am I, dying from hunger. I shall get up and go to my father and I shall say to him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I no longer deserve to be called your son; treat me as you would treat one of your hired workers.”’ So he got up and went back to his father.

While he was still a long way off, his father caught sight of him, and was filled with compassion. He ran to his son, embraced him and kissed him. His son said to

GLOSSARY: • **Gilgal:** A place near Jericho, in the Jordan Valley, where Joshua erected twelve (12) commemorative stones (one for each tribe of Israel) to recall the halting of the waters of the Jordan River when the Israelites crossed into the Promised Land. • **Passover:** The annual Jewish feast celebrated to commemorate the sparing of the Israelite firstborn children during the Tenth Plague, as well as the liberation of the whole people of Israel from its condition of slavery in Egypt. This feast had its culmination in the eating of the sacrificial lamb, during the Passover meal. • **Manna:** The miraculous food sent by the Lord to his people during their forty years’ sojourn in the desert.

him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you; I no longer deserve to be called your son.' But his father ordered his servants, 'Quickly bring the finest robe and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Take the fattened calf and slaughter it. Then let us celebrate with a feast, because this son of mine was dead, and has come to life again; he was lost, and has been found.' Then the celebration began.

Now the older son had been out in the field and, on his way back, as he neared the house, he heard the sound of music and dancing. He called one of the servants and asked what this might mean. The servant said to him, 'Your brother has returned and your father has slaughtered the fattened calf because he has him back safe and sound.' He became angry, and when he refused to enter the house, his father came out and pleaded with him. He said to his father in reply, 'Look, all these years I served you and not once did I disobey your orders; yet you never gave me even a young goat to feast on with my friends. But when your son returns, who swallowed up your property with prostitutes, for him you slaughter the fattened calf.'

He said to him, 'My son, you are here with me always; everything I have is yours. But now we must celebrate and rejoice, because your brother was dead and has come to life again; he was lost and has been found.'

The Gospel of the Lord!
All—Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ!

Homily

Profession of Faith

(Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed)

*All—*I believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible.

I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages. God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made,

consubstantial with the Father; through him all things were made. For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven, *(bow)* and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man.** For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate, he suffered death and was buried, and rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.

I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church. I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen!

Prayer of the Faithful

*P —*Today's Gospel passage reminds us of both our sinfulness and God's forgiveness. Full of trust in the Divine Mercy, let us present our humble petitions for all the sinful members of humankind as we say:

All—Merciful Lord, hear our prayer!

*C —*For the Catholic Church: May she always be an agent of reconciliation with God among the peoples of the world. Let us pray! **R.**

*C —*For our spiritual leaders: May they zealously fulfill their task of calling God's people to conversion and bring sinners back to the home of the Father. Let us pray! **R.**

*C —*For all parents and educators: May they edify their children and students with their good example, and mir-

ror to them the forgiving love of God the Father. Let us pray! **R.**

*C —*For our youth: May they learn from the prodigal son in the parable not to squander their gifts of nature and grace; and if they fall, may they never doubt God's immense love for them. Let us pray! **R.**

*C —*For all of us: In imitation of the father in today's parable, may we accept with encouraging trust former convicts and other offenders who are seeking to start a new life. Let us pray! **R.**

*C —*Let us pray in silence for our personal intentions.
(Pause) Let us pray! **R.**

*P —*God, our Father, we stand in front of You like prodigal children who have disappointed and hurt You so many times and in so many ways. Accept us once again with love and make us merciful towards those who have offended us. We ask this through Christ our Lord and Savior.
All—Amen!



Preparation of the Gifts

*P —*Pray, brethren . . .
All—May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands, for the praise and glory of his name, for our good and the good of all his holy Church.

Prayer over the Offerings

*P —*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.

Through Christ our Lord.
All—Amen!

Preface of Lent I

*P —*The Lord be with you!
All—And with your spirit!
*P —*Lift up your hearts!

All—We lift them up to the Lord!

P —Let us give thanks to the Lord our God!

All—It is right and just!

P —It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation, always and everywhere to give you thanks, Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God, through Christ our Lord.

For by your gracious gift each year your faithful await the sacred paschal feasts with the joy of minds made pure, so that, more eagerly intent on prayer and on the works of charity, and participating in the mysteries by which they have been reborn, they may be led to the fullness of grace that you bestow on your sons and daughters.

And so, with Angels and Archangels, with Thrones and Dominions, and with all the hosts and Powers of heaven, we sing the hymn of your glory, as without end we acclaim: **All**—Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of hosts. Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest!

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest!

Memorial Acclamation

P —The mystery of faith!

All—When we eat this Bread and drink this Cup, we

proclaim your Death, O Lord, until you come again!



All—Our Father . . .

P —Deliver us, Lord . . .

All—For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and for ever.

Sign of Peace

Breaking of the Bread

All—Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world: have mercy on us. (2x)

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world: grant us peace.

Communion

P —Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who takes away the sins of the world. Blessed are those called to the Supper of the Lamb.

All—Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.

Communion Antiphon

(To be recited only when no Communion Hymn is sung.)

You must rejoice, my son, for your brother was dead and has come to life; he was lost and is found.

Prayer after Communion

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

Through Christ our Lord.

All—Amen!

CONCLUDING RITES



P —The Lord be with you!

All—And with your spirit!

P —Bow your heads and pray for God's blessing. *(Pause)*

—Look upon those who call to you, O Lord, and sustain the weak; give life by your unfailing light to those who walk in the shadow of death, and bring those rescued by your mercy from every evil to reach the highest good.

Through Christ our Lord.

All—Amen!

P —May almighty God bless you: the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

All—Amen!

P —Go in peace, glorifying the Lord by your life!

All—Thanks be to God!

Why do I need to confess my sins to a priest?

How do I make a good confession?

You will find the answers to these questions in the pamphlets



These pamphlets and essential leaflet guides in English or Filipino are available at the **Word & Life Religious Store** and other **selected Religious bookstores**. For more information, call 894-5401/02.



WORD & LIFE PUBLICATIONS

Don Bosco Compound, A. Arnaiz Ave. cor. Chino Roces Ave., Makati, Metro Manila

Postal Address: P.O. Box 1820, MCPO, 1258 Makati, Metro Manila, Philippines

Tel. Nos. 894-5401; 894-5402; 892-2169 • Telefax: 894-5241 • Website: www.wordandlife.org

• E-mail: marketing@wordandlife.org; wordandlifepublications@gmail.com • FB: Word & Life Publications

• Editorial Team: Fr. S. Putzu, J. Domingo, A. Adsuara, V. David, D. Daguio, R. Molomog

• Illustrations: A. Sarmiento, B. Cleofe • Marketing: Fr. B. Nolasco • Circulation: R. Saldua