

SUNDAY READINGS & PRAYERS

LENT 4 (YEAR C)

COLLECT

Merciful Lord, absolve your people from their offences, that through your bountiful goodness we may all be delivered from the chains of those sins which by our frailty we have committed; grant this, heavenly Father, for Jesus Christ's sake, our blessed Lord and Saviour, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

FIRST READING

Joshua 5.9–12

A reading from the book of Joshua.

After the Israelites had crossed over the Jordan river, The Lord said to Joshua, 'Today I have rolled away from you the disgrace of Egypt.' And so that place is called Gilgal to this day. While the Israelites were camped in Gilgal they kept the passover in the evening on the fourteenth day of the month in the plains of Jericho. On the day after the passover, on that very day, they ate the produce of the land, unleavened cakes and parched grain. The manna ceased on the day they ate the produce of the land, and the Israelites no longer had manna; they ate the crops of the land of Canaan that year.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

from Ps 32



R. Preserve me, God, I take refuge in you.

(All repeat)



Happy is the man whose sin is forgiven,
and whose transgressions are put away.
Happy is the man to whom the Lord
imputes no guilt,
and in whose spirit there is no guile. *R.*

I acknowledged my sin to you,
and did not conceal my guilt.

I said, 'I will confess my offence to the Lord';
then you forgave me the guilt of my sin. *R.*

You are my hiding-place, you preserve me
from trouble;
you surround me with shouts of deliverance.
Be glad you righteous and rejoice in the Lord;
shout for joy, all who are true of heart. *R.*

SECOND READING

2 Corinthians 5.16–21

A reading from the second letter of Paul to
the Corinthians.

From now on, we regard no one from a human point of view; even though we once knew Christ from a human point of view, we know him no longer in that way. So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us. So we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us; we entreat 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.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Lk 15.18

Praise to you, O Christ, King of eternal glory.

I will arise and go to my father and say:
'Father, I have sinned against heaven and
before you.'

Praise to you, O Christ, King of eternal glory.

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Hear the Gospel ✠ of our Lord Jesus Christ
according to Luke.

Glory to you, O Lord.

Now 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.'"

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Lord, it is with great joy that we offer you the sacrifice that brings everlasting healing. Grant us the grace to celebrate it for the world's salvation, with due reverence and obedience; through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

POST-COMMUNION

Lord God, whose blessed Son our Saviour gave his back to the smiters and did not hide his face from shame: give us grace to endure the sufferings of this present time with sure confidence in the glory that shall be revealed; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**