

4th SUNDAY OF LENT (C)

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. 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.

1st. READING (Jos 5,9-12)

Then Yahweh said to Joshua: "Today I have removed from you the shame of Egypt." So the place is called Gilgal up to this day. The Israelites encamped in Gilgal where they celebrated the Passover on the evening of the fourteenth day of the month in the plains of Jericho. On the following day, they ate of the produce of the land: unleavened bread and roasted grain on that very day. And from that day on when they ate of the produce of the land, the manna ceased. There was no more manna for the Israelites, and that year they ate of the fruit of the land of Canaan.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM (Ps 34)

I will bless the Lord all my days; /his praise will be ever on my lips. /My soul makes its boast in the Lord; /let the lowly hear and rejoice. /Oh, let us magnify the Lord, /together let us glorify his name! /I sought the Lord, and he answered me; /from all my fears he delivered me. /They who look to him are radiant with joy, /their faces never clouded with shame. When the poor cry out, the Lord hears and saves them from distress.

2nd. READING (2Cor 5,17-21)

For that same reason, the one who is in Christ is a new creature. For him the old things have passed away; a new world has come. All this is the work of God who in Christ reconciled us to himself, and who entrusted to us the ministry of reconciliation.

Because in Christ God reconciled the world with himself, no longer taking into account their trespasses and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. So we present ourselves as ambassadors in the name of Christ, as if God himself makes an appeal to you through us. Let God reconcile you; this we ask you in the name of Christ. He had no sin, but God made him bear our sin, so that in him we might share the holiness of God.

GOSPEL (Lk 15,1-3.11-32)

Meanwhile tax collectors and sinners were seeking the company of Jesus, all of them eager to hear what he had to say. But the Pharisees and the scribes frowned at this, muttering. "This man welcomes sinners and eats with them." So Jesus told them this parable: Jesus continued, "There was a man with two sons. The younger said to his father: 'Give me my share of the estate.' So the father divided his property between them. Some days later, the younger son gathered all his belongings and started off for a distant land where he squandered his wealth in loose living. Having spent everything, he was hard pressed when a severe famine broke out in that land. So he hired himself out to a well-to-do citizen of that place and was sent to work on a pig farm. So famished was he that he longed to fill his stomach even with the food given to the pigs, but no one offered him anything. Finally coming to his senses, he said: 'How many of my father's hired workers have food to spare, and here I am starving to death! I will get up and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against God and before you. I no longer deserve to be called your son. Treat me then as one of your hired servants.' With that thought in mind he set off for his father's house. He was still a long way off when his father caught sight of him. His father was so deeply moved with

compassion that he ran out to meet him, threw his arms around his neck and kissed him. 21The son said: 'Father, I have sinned against Heaven and before you. I no longer deserve to be called your son...' But the father turned to his servants: 'Quick! Bring out the finest robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Take the fattened calf and kill it. We shall celebrate and have a feast, for this son of mine was dead and has come back to life. He was lost and is found.' And the celebration began. Meanwhile, the elder son had been working in the fields. As he returned and was near the house, he heard the sound of music and dancing. He called one of the servants and asked what it was all about. The servant answered: 'Your brother has come home safe and sound, and your father is so happy about it that he has ordered this celebration and killed the fattened calf.' The elder son became angry and refused to go in. His father came out and pleaded with him. The indignant son said: 'Look, I have slaved for you all these years. Never have I disobeyed your orders. Yet you have never given me even a young goat to celebrate with my friends. Then when this son of yours returns after squandering your property with loose women, you kill the fattened calf for him.' The father said: 'My son, you are always with me, and everything I have is yours. But this brother of yours was dead, and has come back to life. He was lost and is found. And for that we had to rejoice and be glad.'"

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. Through Christ our Lord.

Prayer after Communion

O God, who enlighten 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.