

## LITURGY OF THE WORD

### Fourth Sunday of Lent C

#### First Reading *Joshua 5:9-12*

A reading from the book of Joshua

*The people of God went to the promised land and there kept the passover.*

The Lord said to Joshua, 'Today I have taken the shame of Egypt away from you.' The Israelites pitched their camp at Gilgal and kept the Passover there on the fourteenth day of the month, at evening in the plain of Jericho. On the morrow of the Passover they tasted the produce of that country, unleavened bread and roasted ears of corn, that same day. From that time, from their first eating of the produce of that country, the manna stopped falling. And having manna no longer, the Israelites fed from that year onwards on what the land of Canaan yielded.

*The Word of the Lord*

**R. Thanks be to God.**

#### Responsorial Psalm

Ps 33:2-7. R. v.9

**(R.) Taste and see the goodness of the Lord.**

1. I will bless the Lord at all times, his praise always on my lips; in the Lord my soul shall make its boast. The humble shall hear and be glad.

2. 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.

3. Look towards him and be radiant; let your faces not be abashed. This poor man called; the Lord heard him and rescued him from all his distress.

**(R.) Taste and see the goodness of the Lord.**

#### Second Reading

*2 Corinthians 5:17-21*

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

*God reconciled us to himself through Christ.*

For anyone who is in Christ, there is a new creation; the old creation has gone, and now the new one is here. It is all God's work. It was God who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the work of handing on his reconciliation. In other words, God in Christ was reconciling the world to himself, not holding men's faults against them, and he has entrusted to us the news that they are reconciled. So we are ambassadors for Christ; it is as though God were appealing through us, and the appeal that we make in Christ's name is: be reconciled to God. For our sake God made the sinless one into sin, so that in him we might become the goodness of God.

*The Word of the Lord*

**R. Thanks be to God.**

#### Gospel Acclamation *Luke 15:18*

Praise and honour to you, Lord Jesus Christ!

I will rise and go to my Father and tell him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. Praise and honour to you, Lord Jesus Christ!

#### Gospel *Luke 15:1-3, 11-32*

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke

*Your brother here was dead and has come to life.*

The tax collectors and the sinners were all seeking the company of Jesus to hear what he had to say, and the Pharisees and the scribes complained. 'This man' they said 'welcomes sinners and eats with them.' So he spoke this parable to them: 'A man had two sons. The younger said to his father, "Father, let me have the share of the estate that would come to me." So the father divided the property between them. A few days later, the younger son got together everything he had and left for a distant country where he squandered his money on a life of debauchery. 'When he had spent it all, that country experienced a severe famine, and now he began to feel the pinch, so he hired himself out to one of the local inhabitants who put him on his farm to feed the pigs. And he would willingly have filled his belly with the husks the pigs were eating but no one offered him anything. Then he came to his senses and said, "How many of my father's paid servants have more food than they want, and here am I dying of hunger! I will leave this place and go to my father and say: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you; I no longer deserve to be called your son; treat me as one of your paid servants." So he left the place and went back to his father. 'While he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was moved with pity. He ran to the boy, clasped him in his arms and kissed him tenderly. Then his son said, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I no longer deserve to be called your son." But the father said to his servants, "Quick! Bring out the best robe and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Bring the calf we have been fattening, and kill it; we are going to have a feast, a celebration, because this son of mine was dead and has come back to life; he was lost and is found." And they began to celebrate. 'Now the elder son was out in the fields, and on his way back, as he drew near the house, he could hear music and dancing. Calling one of the servants he asked what it was all about. "Your brother has come" replied the servant "and your father has killed the calf we had fattened because he has got him back safe and sound." He was angry then and refused to go in, and his father came out to plead with him; but he answered his father, "Look, all these years I have slaved for you and never once disobeyed your orders, yet you never offered me so much as a kid for me to

celebrate with my friends. But for this son of yours, when he comes back after swallowing up your property – he and his women – you kill the calf we had been fattening." 'The father said, "My son, you are with me always and all I have is yours. But it is only right we should celebrate and rejoice, because your brother here was dead and has come to life; he was lost and is found."'

*The Gospel of the Lord*

**R. Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ**

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**REFLECTION by Nick Brodie**

Pope Francis says that today's Gospel parable 'leads us to the heart of God'. On the one hand, it shows us that 'God always forgives. We are the ones who tire of asking for forgiveness.' What the prodigal son's Father shows us is God's boundless mercy. But on the other hand, the parable also shows how easily we humans can slip into what the Pope calls 'the indignation of the elder son'. If we do not see God as our merciful Father, then we can easily fall into 'living a distant religion, made of prohibitions and duties.' When we judge and exclude, we try to limit God's mercy. Falling into that mindset, we lose sight of our relatedness. We can become like the resentful elder son who calls his own brother 'this son of yours'.

To combat this mindset of 'rigidity towards our neighbour' the Pope suggests that, like the Father, we 'make merry and rejoice'. We should try to 'demonstrate our closeness to those who repent or who are on the way, to those who are in crisis or who are far away ... we have to offer them a warm welcome that encourages them to go ahead.' In our lives, we should always treat others without judgment. And in our churches, we should always warmly welcome them home.

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**ST BERNARD'S PARISH**  
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## FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT Year C

### YEAR C



#### CHURCH EVENTS

**Choir Practice**  
1PM Every second and fourth Monday

**Cenacle Prayer 9.30 am**  
Fridays after Mass

**Croatian Mass Saturday**  
April 5th 11am

**Wrap with Love TUESDAY**  
8TH April  
10-11am BB Library

**Lenten Program**  
Wednesdays after Mass  
5 March—9 April

**Parish Sacramental Program**  
**First Reconciliation 2025**  
**Celebration Mass Tuesday**  
8th April 5pm St Bernard's Church

**Cuppa with Mary MacKillop**  
Tuesday April 8th 10-11am  
@ Nola & Bernie Beatty's home  
Ph: 0410 629 416

**Craft Group 10am**  
Thursdays Church Meeting Room

**ADORATION TUESDAYS**  
@ 4pm

**COFFEE CLUB Thursdays**  
after 9am Mass  
Venue: Corrigans Cove

As we listen to the account of the Prodigal son how can we look at it with fresh eyes?

We know that in asking for his inheritance, the son was in actual fact saying – 'Gee Dad, I can't wait for you to die, I want to have my share now while I'm young enough to enjoy it.'

If we look back to Genesis, Jacob also tricked his brother out of his inheritance with his mother's help. These things happen in many families. It may have happened in yours or someone you know. It is not what happens but rather how we treat it.

The Prodigal's father never gave up hope that his son would repent and return, but the elder brother was angry when the prodigal returned and was accepted joyously by the father with rejoicing. So many conflicting emotions are seen in this simple story – greed, impatience, longing (father), despair and repentance, jealousy and unforgiveness from the brother but overall it is the father whose reaction is our guide. His was the hope for the return and reconciliation. His was the joy and the celebration on the return of the lost one.

Who do you identify with? For many years I identified with the elder son. It is only in maturity that I began to look at my own life – I was very close to my sister and by her marriage we could have lost her, as her husband did his best to separate her from us, yet even if he had succeeded I cannot imagine rejecting her if she returned. How would I have reacted though if she had caused me hardship? I cannot know, but there are so many instances in families where anger and malice have destroyed what should have been loving relationships.

While this parable refers mostly with the loving Father (our Father God) we cannot overlook all family dimensions. I have a cousin who refused to talk to her mother even to her death, another who took her sister to court over a will, another who refused to forgive her sibling over a will dispute. I could go on with acquaintances in similar situations. What is the problem? Is it the actual conflict or the heart of the person who will not forgive, who will not resume relationship.

I believe that if we truly observe the 4<sup>th</sup> commandment 'Honour thy father and thy mother', all of the trials and tribulations of belonging to a family can, with prayer, be overcome. We need to look at our relationships, especially within our family. A wise priest once said: 'Stop looking at what he or she did and make the first step yourself, even if it means being the one to say Sorry.' I believe that if we honour our Father God, we must be prepared to make that first step whether we are the Prodigal son, the father or the sibling. May each of you find what this parable is saying to you.

Deidre Herring



**MASSES THIS WEEK**

**Monday 31st:—Sunday 6th March**

**Monday 31st :** NO MASS

**Tuesday 1st:** Mass 5pm

**Wednesday 2nd:** Mass 9am

**Thursday 3rd:** Mass 9am

**Friday 4th:** Mass 9am

**Saturday 5th:** Mass 5pm

Croatian Mass 11am

Reconciliation 3.30-4.30

**Sunday 6th:** Mass 9am

**ROSTERS**

**29/30 MARCH**

**Cleaning**

31/3-4/4 M DeSmet  
J Maher

**5.00PM MASS**

Welcomer B Oerder  
Commentator: B  
Maynard  
Readers: P O’Kelly  
Eucharistic Ministers  
J McCarthy  
Computer Screen  
M O’Neill

**9AM MASS**

Welcomer T van den  
Broek  
Commentator N  
Beatty  
Reader:J  
O’Sullivan . . .  
Eucharistic  
Ministers ,  
S Beashel, A Scicluna  
Computer Screen T  
Jones

**MORNING TEA**

M & S Beashel

**COUNTERS:**

D & L May

**5/6 APRIL**

**Cleaning**

7-11 B Coffey/M Paine

**5.00PM MASS**

Welcomer J Anderson  
Commentator S Ebejer  
Reader P Nolan  
Eucharistic Ministers  
L Rodwell  
Computer Screen  
J O’Sullivan

**9.00 AM MASS:**

Welcomer L May  
Commentator J  
Whiteford  
Reader: N Beatty  
Eucharistic Ministers  
M & C Lowe  
Computer Screen D  
May

**MORNING TEA:**

Filipino Community

**COUNTERS:**

T Priest/J Whiteford

**PARISH FINANCIAL SUPPORT**

A/C Name: St Bernard’s  
Operating  
BSB: 062-786  
A/C No: 00012939  
Ref: Family Name

**STATIONS OF THE CROSS**

Parishioners are invited to attend the Stations of the Cross each Friday during Lent.

A soup dinner is served after the short service.  
The Stations of the Cross are held at 5.30pm each Friday.

**LENTEN GROUP**

Will be held after Mass on Wednesdays beginning March 5 Ash Wednesday—April 9  
Enquiries: Marie Weatherall 0405 028 057

**EASTER MUSIC CHOIR PRACTICE**

We continue our Easter Music preparation every Monday at 1.00pm from now until Easter:  
Monday 31 March, Monday 7 April and Monday 14 April  
All welcome!

**FUNERALS IN THE PARISH**

Mr Ivan Backo  
Friday 28th March 11am  
St Bernard’s Church

**VOLUNTEER FOR ROSTERS FOR HOLY WEEK**

Rosters are in the foyer to be filled in for Holy Week. The times of the ceremonies are on each day.  
Could you please fill in your name and a contact number and put YES under day you will be available.

If you have emailed a response, please check it is right and add your contact number.  
Thank you for your assistance.

**Parish Sacramental Program 2025  
FIRST RECONCILIATION**

The Celebration Mass for First Reconciliation will be held on Tuesday 8th April @ 5pm at St Bernard’s Church

**Holy Week Ceremonies**

Holy Thursday 17th April 6.00pm

Good Friday Stations of the Cross 18th April 10.00am

Celebration of the Lord’s Passion 18th April 3.00pm

Easter Vigil 19th April 6.00pm

Easter Sunday 20th April 9.00am



**Holy Week**



**Irene** lives in a remote village in the Kongolo Region in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).

Life hasn’t been easy for Irene. After losing her father in a war, Irene and her family were forced to flee their home. Life became even more challenging when her husband left, leaving Irene to raise her 2 children alone. Without finishing her education and with few job opportunities in her village, she struggled to provide even the basics for her family. Things began to change when Irene joined the Youth Capacity Strengthening Program (YCSP), run by Caritas Kongolo with the support of Caritas Australia. Through the program, Irene learned sewing skills and was provided with a sewing machine and fabric. Irene also gained farming skills. Now, she grows enough food to feed her family and even shares her sewing knowledge by mentoring other women in her community.

*“Before, women depended on men’s income, but now, with our sewing skills, we can take care of ourselves.”* Irene said.  
Your support of Project Compassion helps women like Irene to create brighter futures for themselves and their families.



Envelopes available for donations or online at:  
[caritas.org.au/project-compassion](http://caritas.org.au/project-compassion)

**The Jubilee Prayer**

Father in heaven,  
may the faith you have given us  
in your son, Jesus Christ, our  
brother, and the flame  
of charity enkindled  
in our hearts by the Holy Spirit,  
reawaken in us the blessed hope  
for the coming of your  
Kingdom.

May your grace transform us  
into tireless cultivators of the seeds of  
the Gospel.

May those seeds transform from within  
both humanity and the whole cosmos, in  
the sure expectation  
of a new heaven and a new earth, when,  
with the powers of Evil  
vanquished, your glory will shine  
eternally.

May the grace of the  
Jubilee reawaken in us, Pilgrims of  
Hope,  
a yearning for the treasures of  
heaven.

May that same grace spread  
the joy and peace of our  
Redeemer  
throughout the earth.

To you our God, eternally blessed,  
be glory and praise for ever.

**Amen**

**Remembering the Sick:**

Kristy Crosby, Jeanette Clarke, Margaret Priest, Chris Bowditch, Sheree Jackson, Brendan Blyton, Wendy & Pat Roberts, Mark O’Neill, Karen Nixon, Kevin Totterell, Dawn Robinson, Maria de Rocco, Myrna Glenn, Norma Dean, Ann Marie McLoughlin, Antonette Doyle, Christine Norman, Anne Gatehouse, Tony Vogel, Suzanne Hughes, Sr Marie McAlister, Peter O’Neill, Fr John Walter, Fr Kevin Murphy, Allan Rogers, Rita Condon, Ben Copland, Vince Burns, Patrick Burns, Carolyn Burns, John Dillon, James Lee, Trish Hamilton, Jim Banks, Dennis Sheather, Mary Henderson, Diane Lanzon, Victor Edith, Jan Simpson, Allan Odlum, Luke Ward, Andrew Morton, Ken Evendon, Judy Betts, Anica Bautovic, Angela Mylott, those in hospital and nursing homes.

**Death Anniversaries:** are listed in the Memorial Book at the front of the Church and names can be added to it if dates are provided.

**We pray for the recently deceased in the Parish Community:** Ivan Backo, Jean McSmith, David Wick, Joe Quigley, Margaret Silversides, Patricia Totterdell, David Cowley, Joanne Rogers, Gerald Lewis, Josephine Beckhaus, Cyril Noyeaux, Frank Simic, Sr Paulinus Croker, Marion O’Grady, Patricia Suhl, Neil Leonard, Letitia Baz, Trent Fisk, Kevin Carew, Margaret Kelly, Arthur Hurrell, Vicki Lukasik, Paul Skinner, Suzanne Melton, James Quirk, Giovanni Menon, Tony Puconja, Hazel Nolan, Elise McGahey, Richard Smart, Patrick Dunn, Laurence Foran, Lynton Ryan, Jacki Harding, Keith Cooke, Sarah Good, Robert Mitchell, Joyce Hurrell, Archbishop Francis Carroll, Ruth O’Malley, Julie Morgan, Suzanne Houssard, Nancy Sykes, Lillian Burkinshaw, Lynette Arundel, Patricia McKeough, Ivan Trojkovic, Brian O’Connor, Annie Scicluna, Francis Bezzina, Pam Wilson, Drago Bandur, Vin Taylor

**Pope Francis Monthly Prayer Intentions**

**APRIL**

**For the use of the new technologies**

Let us pray that the use of the new technologies will not replace human relationships, will respect the dignity of the person, and will help us face the crises of our times.

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