

MARCH 31, 2019  
FOURTH SUNDAY  
IN LENT



*We are reunited to God through Christ.*

### DAILY BIBLE READINGS

These passages are related to the Lectionary texts for this Sunday.

<b>Sunday</b>	<b>Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32</b>	<b>Parable of the forgiving father</b>
<b>Monday</b>	<b>Joshua 5:9-12</b>	<b>Passover at Gilgal</b>
<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>2 Corinthians 5:16-21</b>	<b>The ministry of reconciliation</b>
<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Hosea 2:13-20</b>	<b>The Lord courts Israel as a bride</b>
<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Luke 15:4-10</b>	<b>Lost and found</b>
<b>Friday</b>	<b>Colossians 1:15-23</b>	<b>The work of Christ</b>
<b>Saturday</b>	<b>Psalms 32</b>	<b>The joy of forgiveness</b>
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>John 12:1-8</b>	<b>Mary anoints Jesus at Bethany</b>

### SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

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.

**2 Corinthians 5:18-19 (NRSV)**

### PRAYERS AND BLESSING

#### **A Prayer for the Week:**

Dear gracious and merciful God, thank you for restoring us in a loving relationship to you and for sending us out to extend your love to others. Amen.

#### **Mealtime Prayer:**

Come Lord Jesus, be our guest, and let these gifts of food to us be blessed. Let there be a goodly share on every table everywhere. Amen.

#### **A Blessing to Give:**

May the Lord fill you with good things, with joy and gladness and a clean heart. (Psalm 32:11)



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### HYMN OF THE WEEK

*When Our Song Says  
Peace*



### CARING CONVERSATIONS



Discuss in your home, small group, or use for personal reflections:

- What does it mean to you to be reunited—or reconciled—to another person?
- We all experience difficult times in our relationships to family and friends. What helps to restore good relationships with others?
- As followers of Christ, we represent Christ and his message of being reconciled or reunited to God (Corinthians 5:20). How do you show or communicate to others Christ's work of reconciliation?

### DEVOTIONS



*Read:* Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32.

If children are present, consider role playing this parable. This is one of the most well known parables in the Bible. It has been described as the parable of the prodigal son. It has also been named the parable of the prodigal father. Prodigal means wasteful. How are the son and the father in this parable wasteful? The story is preceded by two other parables about the lost being found and an accusation that Jesus "welcomes sinners and eats with them" (v.2). The current parable ends with the father saying "this brother of yours was dead and has come to life; he was lost and has been found" (v. 32). Jesus tells the story of a selfish, disrespectful, and disobedient son whose life has fallen apart and yet is fully received once again by his father. Who do you relate to most in this parable? The accepting father? The resentful older son? The disobedient younger son? Explain.

*Pray:* **Dear Lord, you who welcome sinners and eat with them, we thank you for accepting us as we are and restoring us with extravagant love. Amen.**

### SERVICE



It is tempting for us to want to deal with others on the basis of our understanding of fairness, but God sends us out into the world to show God's love that goes beyond fairness to kindness and mercy. Be intentional this week about showing God's kindness and mercy to someone who others may not deem as worthy to receive your care. A warm smile, an act of kindness, or taking time to have a caring conversation is a way to show God's love beyond measure.

### RITUALS AND TRADITIONS



The earliest Christian paintings come from tombs in the Catacombs of Rome, Italy. They show the life of Jesus. Christian art continues to be a valuable tradition that communicates the biblical story to us. There are many artists who have interpreted the Prodigal Son through painting. Find artwork online or in books in your local library depicting the parable of the prodigal son. Think about what the various interpretations in the paintings of the father, older son, and younger son tell you about this parable. What do these various paintings suggest to you about our relationship to God?



In addition to *Taking Faith Home*, celebrate milestones in your daily life as an effective faith formation tool. Go to: [www.milestonesministry.org](http://www.milestonesministry.org)