



CELEBRATING AT HOME

24TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

Loss, recovery & celebration (Luke 15:1-32)



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Sign of the Cross

In the name of the Father, and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

The Lord is here, present among us.

**We are gathered with the whole Church
in this moment of prayer.**

Preparing to hear the Word

Lord Jesus,

you are the mercy of God.

Lord Jesus,

you save us with forgiveness.

Lord Jesus,

you draw us into the Kingdom of God.

Scripture Reading (*Luke 15:1-32*)

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:

'What man among you with a hundred sheep, losing one, would not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and go after the missing one till he found it? And when he found it, would he not joyfully take it on his shoulders and then, when he got home, call together his friends and neighbours? "Rejoice with me," he would say. "I have found my sheep that was lost." In the same way I tell you, there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one repentant sinner than over ninety-nine virtuous men who have no need of repentance.

Or again, what woman with ten drachmas would not, if she lost one, light a lamp and sweep out the house and search thoroughly till she found it? And then, when she had found it, call together her friends and neighbours? "Rejoice with me," she would say. "I have found the drachma I lost." In the same way, I tell you, there is rejoicing among the angels of God over one repentant sinner.'

He also said: '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."

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The father said, "My son, you are with me always and all I have is yours. But it was only right we should celebrate and rejoice, because your brother here was dead and has come to life; he was lost and is found."

Reflection - *Loss, recovery & celebration*

The three parables which form the Gospel this week share a common pattern: loss, finding, celebration.

Jesus tells these parables in the context of a shared meal with the 'tax collectors and sinners'. The scribes and Pharisees complain about Jesus welcoming sinners and eating with them. Jesus tells these parables to explain his actions and to invite the scribes and Pharisees into a new understanding of God's love and mercy.

The parables of the lost sheep, the lost coin and the lost sons share a common theme: that the mercy of God breaks through all human and religious restrictions about how God should act toward sinners.

They are stories of lavish and undeserved love and mercy. What shepherd in his right mind will abandon ninety-nine healthy sheep to go after a lost one? What woman will spend all day turning the house upside down to find a coin of little value? What father will joyfully welcome home a wasteful and disrespectful son? What brother will do the same? Scribes, Pharisees and we ourselves may not, but God will.

The Gospel offers not just the *hope* of God's mercy and forgiveness but the *certainty* of it.

These three parables are also an invitation to the scribes and Pharisees, and to us, to join in Jesus' mission of mercy; to behave as God behaves towards our brothers and sisters - with mercy and forgiveness - and welcoming all to the Great Feast.

Prayers of Intercession

Lord, when we are overcome with weakness and guilt,
give us faith to trust in your mercy.

Strengthened by your forgiveness,
may we be sacraments of healing and reconciliation.

You are full of mercy and compassion,
be our help and strength.

Lord's Prayer

Formed by the teaching and example of Jesus,
we pray:

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come.
Thy will be done on earth
as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread
and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.**

Closing Prayer

God, you are always gracious to us.
May we respond to your love
and become a living source of healing
for our world.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Blessing

May the blessing of God be among us,
and remain with us for ever.
Amen.



Journey into the Light

This resource is presented by the Carmelites of Australia & Timor-Leste at a time when many cannot gather together as we usually do to celebrate the Eucharist. We are conscious that Christ is present not only in the Blessed Sacrament but also in the Scriptures and in our hearts. Even when we are on our own we remain part of the Body of Christ.

In the room you decide to use for this prayer you could have a lighted candle, a crucifix and the Bible. These symbols help keep us mindful of the sacredness of our time of prayer and can help us feel connected with our local worshipping communities.

This text is arranged with parts for a leader and for all to pray, but the leader's parts can be shared among those present.

As you use this prayer know that the Carmelites will be remembering in our prayer all the members of our family at this time.



The Carmelites
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