

Prayer Gathering for Fourth Week of Lent

SIGN OF THE CROSS +

OPENING PRAYER

**Father of Abundance,
you created a planet filled with life, in a universe busting with wonder
and handed it all over to us, your children.
Help us to marvel at your gracious gifts
and to be grateful to you for bestowing so many blessings upon us.
We ask this in the power of the Holy Spirit, through Christ, our Lord. AMEN.**

READING

MOMENT FOR SILENCE

GOSPEL PASSAGE

SHARING QUESTIONS

*“The manna ceased. No longer was there manna for the Israelites,
who that year ate of the yield of the land of Canaan.”*

**The manna, which had sustained the wandering Israelites for so much of their
journey, ceased. They were weaned from this food, cold turkey.**

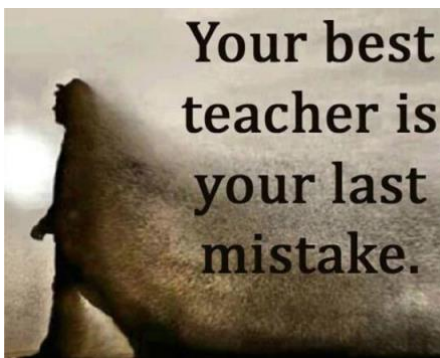
**When has something been taken from you because it was no longer needed?
How long did it take you to adjust?**

“He squandered his inheritance on a life of dissipation.”

**Squandering a resource or opportunity often later causes terrible regret,
yet it’s a common part of the human experience.**

What does the word “squander” make you think of from your own experience?

POSTED RECENTLY



DISCUSSION

“My son, you are here with me always; everything I have is yours.”

The older son saw scarcity in his situation, while his father saw abundance.

**What lesson is God personally offering you in this story? How is the meaning in this
story deeper for you now than in the previous times you have heard it?**

LITANY

When I feel alone...	"You are here with me always."
When I'm angry and hurt...	"You are here with me always."
When someone rejects me...	"You are here with me always."
When my kindness is misunderstood...	"You are here with me always."
When my integrity is questioned...	"You are here with me always."
When my talents go unused...	"You are here with me always."
When I have squandered what I had...	"You are here with me always."
When my contribution doesn't seem to matter...	"You are here with me always."
When my needs are not a priority...	"You are here with me always."
When I toss and turn all night...	"You are here with me always."
When I am far from you...	"You are here with me always."
You are never far from me...	"Everything I have is yours."

OUR FATHER

[OPTIONAL] PRAYER FOR SPIRITUAL COMMUNION (St. Alphonsus Ligouri)

**My Jesus, I believe that you are present in the most Blessed Sacrament.
I love You above all things and I desire to receive You into my soul.
Since I cannot now receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart.
I embrace You as if You were already here, and unite myself wholly to You.
Never permit me to be separated from You. AMEN.**

CLOSING PRAYER

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. AMEN.**

SIGN OF THE CROSS +

READING 1

A reading from the book of Joshua:

The LORD said to Joshua,

“Today I have removed the reproach of Egypt from you.”

While the Israelites were encamped at Gilgal
on the plains of Jericho,
they celebrated the Passover
on the evening of the fourteenth of the month.

On the day after the Passover,
they ate of the produce of the land
in the form of unleavened cakes and parched grain.

On that same day after the Passover,
on which they ate of the produce of the land, the manna ceased.
No longer was there manna for the Israelites,
who that year ate of the yield of the land of Canaan.

The word of the Lord

Thanks be to God

READING 2

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to Luke

Jesus addressed this parable [to the Pharisees]:

*“A man had two sons, and the younger son said to his father,
‘Father give me the share of your estate that should come to me.’*

So the father divided the property between them.

*After a few days, the younger son collected all his belongings
and set off to a distant country
where he squandered his inheritance on a life of dissipation.*

*When he had freely spent everything,
a severe famine struck that country,
and he found himself in dire need.
So he hired himself out to one of the local citizens
who sent him to his farm to tend the swine.
And he longed to eat his fill of the pods on which the swine fed,
but nobody gave him any.*

*Coming to his senses he thought,
‘How many of my father’s hired workers
have more than enough food to eat,
but here am I, dying from hunger.
I shall get up and go to my father and I shall say to him,
“Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you.
I no longer deserve to be called your son;
treat me as you would treat one of your hired workers.”’
So he got up and went back to his father.*

*While he was still a long way off,
his father caught sight of him,
and was filled with compassion.
He ran to his son, embraced him and kissed him.*

*...His father ordered his servants,
‘Quickly bring the finest robe and put it on him;
put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet!
Take the fattened calf and slaughter it!*

*Then let us celebrate with a feast,
because this son of mine was dead, and has come to life again;
he was lost, and has been found!'*

Then the celebration began.

*Now the older son had been out in the field
and, on his way back, as he neared the house,
he heard the sound of music and dancing.
He called one of the servants and asked what this might mean.
The servant [told] him...*

*He became angry,
and when he refused to enter the house,
his father came out and pleaded with him.*

*He said to his father in reply, 'Look, all these years I served you
and not once did I disobey your orders;
yet you never gave me even a young goat
to feast on with my friends.
But when your son returns
who swallowed up your property with prostitutes,
for him you slaughter the fattened calf.'*

*He said to him,
'My son, you are here with me always; everything I have is yours.
But now we must celebrate and rejoice,
because your brother was dead and has come to life again;
he was lost and has been found.'*”

The Gospel of the Lord

Praise to You, Lord, Jesus Christ