**Note: Please leave this on the ambo, thanks.**

**SUNDAY 31st MARCH**

**FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT - YEAR C**

**Introduction**

Good morning / evening we welcome our parishioners and visitors to Mary Immaculate Quakers Hill/Schofields Parish.

Jesus, the Son of God, shows us the true countenance of the Father—the face of mercy. This is most evident in today’s parable of the Prodigal Son. The father is faithful to the love he had always lavished on his sons. He shows this in his readiness to welcome home the squanderer and in holding a banquet for him. He also shows this love in showing understanding of the older son’s condescending attitude. Welcoming the younger son does not mean that the older is less loved. God loves each one in a special way. There should be no room for jealousy in that love.

This year’s Project Compassion showcases the many ways we work around the world with our local partners to offer hope to people most vulnerable to extreme poverty and injustice.

Through your generosity during Project Compassion this year, you are empowering communities with hope and helping those in great need to shape a better future for themselves, their families and their communities.

Please stand and join in singing the Entrance Hymn.

**SUNDAY 31st MARCH**

**FOURTH Sunday OF LENT - Year C**

**LITURGY OF THE WORD**

#### FIRST READING   (Jos 5:9-12)

*A reading from the book of Joshua*

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.*

#### 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. (R.)

#### 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. (R.)

#### 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.)

#### SECOND READING  (2 Cor 5:17-21)

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

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.*

**PLEASE STAND TO WELCOME THE GOSPEL**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

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 (Lk 15:1-3. 11-32)

*A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke*

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.*

**FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT - YEAR C**

**GENERAL INTERCESSION**

**Priest**: — In Christ, we see the face of the merciful Father who waits and welcomes sinners into his eternal home. With confidence, let us pray to the Father that we may be merciful like him.

**Reader:** —That the Church may experience the mercy of the Father, so that in turn she may manifest God’s forgiveness and mercy to the lost, the least, and the last,

We pray:

**R — Lord, hear our prayer.**

**Reader:** That those who govern our country may see their office as oases of mercy where people can experience consolation, hope, and mercy of the Lord,

We pray:

**R — Lord, hear our prayer.**

**Reader:** That those who have been lured away by drugs, alcohol, and abuse may realize their misery, come to their senses, and retrace their steps to the Lord who alone can satisfy all human longing,

We pray:

**R — Lord, hear our prayer.**

**Reader:** That those who are suffering physically, emotionally, and spiritually may find hope and support from their families and friends who are the living signs of the Father’s readiness to welcome those who are in weak and in trouble,

We pray:

**R — Lord, hear our prayer.**

**Reader:** For those who have died. In particular those mention in our parish bulletin. May God’s merciful love shine on them and their loved ones left behind.

We pray:

**R — Lord, hear our prayer.**

**Reader:** **Together we now pray our parish community prayer for the season of Lent:**

**All:** **Loving God, during the sacred season of Lent, bring us closer to you.**

Prepare a place in our homes and hearts for silence and solitude, so that we may re-discover the grace of a prayer-full life.

Help us to fast from those things that threaten the well-being of body and soul remind us of the grace of simplicity.

Enlarge our hearts so that we give to those in need and, in doing so,

re-discover the grace of gratitude and generosity.

May this season be a grace-filled time to rekindle our love and faith in you.

**Priest:** Father of love and mercy, we are not worthy to be called your sons and daughters. But you have reconciled us to yourself through Christ our brother. Hear our petitions, and make us ever more like him who lives and reigns with you, for ever and ever.

**All:** Amen.