

**Lent Week 4 – Year C****Liturgy of the Word - Primary*****God is a Loving Father*****Preparation**

Have a sacred space set up with purple cloth, the colour for Lent, 3 large unlit candles (to be lit during the Breaking Open the Word) and the Word. Add the symbol for this week with the symbols of previous weeks to build up a picture of the Lenten season.

The symbol for Week 1 was a large tray filled with sand to symbolise the desert.

The symbol for Week 2 was a large lit candle, or a lantern.

The symbol for Week 3 was a large wilted, almost dead branch from a tree in a large pot.

For this week, have a large window frame with the silhouette of man looking out the window symbolising the father waiting for his son to return.

WE GATHER**Welcome & Introduction**

Leader: Today we celebrate the fourth week of Lent.
In Sunday's Gospel we learn that God is full of mercy and compassion.
Although sometimes we choose to do the wrong thing,
God is waiting for us ready to forgive us when we admit our mistakes.
God waits patiently just like the father in the story in the Gospel.
God's love is forever and is ours if we seek it.

Gathering Hymn

Turn Back to God (Michael Mangan – This is the Time) **OR**
To Us Christ is All (Andrew Chinn – Welcome to All)

Penitential Rite

Leader: Loving God, you are patient and wait for us to turn to you.
Sometimes we are not focused on you and for these times we ask your forgiveness.

Leader: Lord Jesus, you are full of kindness and compassion. *(pause)* Lord have mercy.

All: Lord have mercy.

Leader: Christ Jesus, you are full of love and peace. *(pause)* Christ have mercy.

All: Christ have mercy.

Leader: Lord Jesus, you are full of mercy and forgiveness. *(pause)* Lord have mercy.

All: Lord have mercy.

Leader: May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins and bring us to life everlasting.

All: Amen.



Opening Prayer

Leader: Let us pray ... (*pause*) ...

Gracious God,
you are so generous with your mercy and forgiveness.
Help us to change our ways and turn to you.

May we be kind and understanding with each other
and be just as patient with them as we want you to be with us.
Give us a kind and generous spirit so that we may reflect your love in all we do.
We ask this in Jesus' name.

All: Amen.

WE LISTEN

First Reading **Joshua 5: 9-12** *The people of God went to the promised land...*

Response to the Reading **Come Back to Me** (Andrew Chinn – Many Roads, One Journey) **OR**
Forgiveness is Yours (Monica Brown – A Special collection)

Gospel Acclamation **Lenten Acclamation** (Michael Mangan – This is the Time) **OR**
Sing a Lenten Acclamation familiar to your community.

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

Reader: There was once a man who had two sons.
The younger son wanted his inheritance right now - even before his father had died!

Chorus: So much hurt!

Reader: The younger son went far away from home and spent all his money
living an extravagant life until there was nothing left.

Chorus: So much waste!

Reader: When a famine came and he had no food, he had to get a job looking after pigs.
He couldn't believe he had sunk so low.

Chorus: So much sadness.

Reader: At last, he realised how foolish he had been and how much pain he had caused.
He decided to go home, beg his father's forgiveness
and ask to become one of his servants.

Chorus: So much regret.



Reader: When the father saw him coming, he ran to him, cried tears of joy and kissed and hugged him. He was so happy to see him!

Chorus: So much compassion!

Reader: But the son fell down at his father's feet and admitted that he had hurt God and his father very much. He said he didn't deserve to be his son.

Chorus: So much sorrow.

Reader: The father called for his servants to bring a new robe, some sandals and a ring for his son. He called for a feast to be laid out to celebrate the return of his son.

Chorus: So much happiness.

Reader: The father said that his son whom he thought was dead, was alive, the son who was lost was now found.

Chorus: So much forgiveness!

Reader: The father said that they would have a party and celebrate the return of his son.

Chorus: So much rejoicing!

Reader: But the older son was very angry, stayed outside and wouldn't come in to the party.

Chorus: So much anger!

Reader: The father came out and asked the older son to join them. But he refused saying that he had worked very hard for his father over the years and had never been given anything.

Chorus: So much stubbornness!

Reader: His father told him that he did appreciate all that he had done and that everything he had would be his one day. He asked him again to come and celebrate.

Chorus: So much generosity.

Reader: The father asked him to celebrate because his brother whom he thought was dead was alive, the one who was lost had been found.

Chorus: So much love.

(Pause)



WE RESPOND

Breaking Open the Word

Leader: Let us all kneel down and pray ... *(pause)* ...

Sometimes we do not live the way God wants us to.
We hurt others, we don't look after ourselves
and we do things that take us from the right path that leads us to God.
Let us ask for God's forgiveness.

All: **I am sorry for the times I have hurt God.** *(Light first candle and pause)*
 I am sorry for the times I have hurt others. *(Light the second candle and pause)*
 I am sorry for the times I have hurt myself. *(Light the third candle and pause)*

Play the song: **From a Long Way Home** (Monica Brown – Praise & Blessings)

Prayer of the Faithful

Leader: Merciful God, you are patient and kind and are always with us,
and so we know we can turn to you and pray.

Reader: Help us to be people of hope
who strive to bring love and peace into others' lives ... *(pause)* Lord hear us.

All: Lord, you are our hope.

Reader: Help us to be people of hope
who strive to bring mercy and forgiveness into others' lives ... *(pause)* Lord hear us.

All: Lord, you are our hope.

Reader: Help us to be people of hope
who strive to bring joy and happiness into others' lives ... *(pause)* Lord hear us.

All: Lord, you are our hope.

Reader: Help us to be people of hope
who strive to bring understanding and kindness into others' lives ... *(pause)* Lord hear us.

All: Lord, you are our hope.

Reader: Help us to walk the road to you that brings us everlasting life ... *(pause)* Lord hear us.

All: Lord, you are our hope.

Leader: Loving God, listen to the prayers that we put before you and, in your mercy,
grant our requests. We ask this in Jesus' name.

All: Amen.



WE GO

Closing Prayer

Leader: Let us pray ... *(pause)* ...

Gracious God,
you are like a loving father to us.
Your love is constant,
and you are always with us ready to show us mercy and forgiveness.

Help us to turn back to you when we go astray
and help us to be confident that you will always listen when we call to you.
We ask this prayer through Jesus, your Son.

All: Amen.

Dismissal

Leader: Go now in the peace and love of God.

All: Thanks be to God.

Recessional Hymn

Change Your Heart (Andrew Chinn – Many Roads, One Journey) **OR**

Hold on to Hope (Drew Lane – *See the Calendar page on LiturgyRitualPrayer.com to find the mp3 and pdf of lyrics of this brand new song*)