

## The Readings on This Day

\*\*\*Click on the links for the Bible Verse(s)

### Fourth Sunday in Lent

We are halfway to the feast of Pascha, the Three Days, but also today we share in God's banquet of mercy. We remember our baptismal white robe as we celebrate the new creation that God has brought about through Christ. In Lent, even as we are still feeding the pigs and grumping in the fields, we are already in the Promised Land. Every Sunday, Easter comes out to meet us, like the father running out to welcome his son.



### [Joshua 5:9-12](#)

The excerpt from Joshua is tied to the parable of the prodigal son because like the prodigal son, the Israelites have arrived safely in what becomes their homeland. No longer sustained by meager food, they enjoy the produce of the land. Thus throughout history God has brought the people out of distress and into a land of plenty.

### [The Psalm for the Day](#)

Having heard about the Israelites' feast in the Promised Land, we join together in [Psalm 32](#). The great waters did not overwhelm us (v. 6). We are guided by God (v. 8). At today's feast, we rejoice in God's mercy (v. 11).

### [2 Corinthians 5:16-21](#)

In this passage Paul speaks of people who are worried because they are not reconciled with God. It is difficult to judge for how many contemporary people is this the case. The passage is tied to the parable of the prodigal son because both brothers needed reconciliation, either with God or with the community. The new cosmic situation in which such bonds are possible was effected by Christ's resurrection.

### [Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32](#)

The two sons are each of us: we are all the foolish runaway who wastes what God has provided, and we are all the smug good guy who condemns the outsider. So it is that Augustine, and Luther after him, taught that all humans are sinful, all need the forgiveness that God offers. The description of a celebrative feast symbolizes the communal nature of the individual's forgiven life. Christians have interpreted this feast as a picture of holy communion.