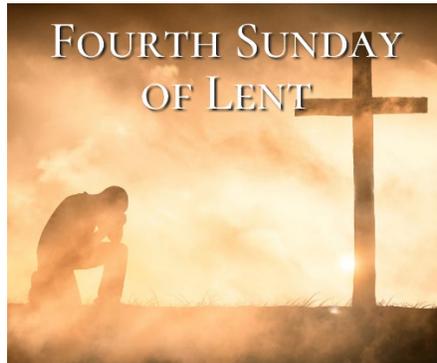


## THIS WEEK'S SCRIPTURES

March 27, 2022

Fourth Sunday of Lent

Joshua 5:9a, 10–12 † 2 Corinthians 5:17–21 † Luke 15:1–3, 11–32



**Reflection by: Sister Eileen Ivory, OP**

One of the best known of Jesus' many parables is the story called the Prodigal Son. This story of a father and his two sons—one a dependable “steady ender,” the other a rebel always pushing the boundaries of his father’s tolerance—is a story to which most parents can relate to a greater or lesser degree.

Less familiar to many of us is Paul’s declaration to the people of Corinth that Christ has “given us the ministry of reconciliation” as well as “entrusting to us the message of reconciliation.” These clearly stated mandates of what is required of us by our Baptism may seem daunting. The whole notion of having reconciliation, that is forgiveness, entrusted to us seems a risky way to propagate a very difficult stance on how best to live life.

In the abstract, forgiveness can be beyond what we can even imagine, just too hard to even seriously consider. Enter the Prodigal Son, his father and his brother. Not so abstract now. We know these people...we are these people. The old adage about walking a mile in the other’s shoes before judging is a good place to begin to forgive.

Who are the people I need to forgive? Will I take the first step? According to St. Paul, we have been given all that we need. Indeed, we are ambassadors for Christ!

Just a word about the horror taking place in Ukraine. Lent and the road to Calvary are happening in real time for the people of Ukraine. We must pray that this story will also end in Resurrection. Glimpses of Easter can be seen in the heroic generosity of the people of Poland and those of other nations accepting refugees. As this tragedy plays out, there will be need for much forgiveness. Pray that we will be up to the task.