

1. Read — Read the verses slowly and prayerfully several times. Write down any words or phrases that seem to stand out:

2. Meditate — Now begin to reflect on the verses and ask God what it means and how he wants to speak to you through the passage. **God what are you saying to me through this?**

3. Pray — Respond from your heart to what God has been saying to you. **What do you want me to know?** Write down your prayer to him or record whatever he says to you.

4. Contemplate — Be quiet before the Lord enjoying His presence.
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**How is God calling you to act in response to what he has shown you?**

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[1] Commentaries of Gospel of Luke, pg. 178  
[2] Commentaries of Gospel of Luke, pg. 178  
[3] Hardon, Modern Catholic Dictionary, pg. 437

# Quick Connect

**What is the Gospel saying? Luke 3:1-3; 11-32** — Pg. 1  
**What is the Church saying Past and Present?** Pages 1-3  
**What is God saying to you through this passage?** Page 4

## **Gospel Reading – Luke 3:1-3; 11-32 –Daily Roman Missal**

Tax collectors and sinners were all drawing near to listen to Jesus, but the Pharisees and scribes began to complain, saying, “This man welcomes sinners and eats with them.” So to them Jesus addressed this parable: “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 son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you; I no longer deserve to be called your son.’ But 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 said to him, ‘Your brother has returned and your father has slaughtered the fattened calf because he has him back safe and sound.’ 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.”

### Spiritual Reading – Office of Readings – 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Lent

From a treatise on John by Saint Augustine, bishop

*Christ is the way to the light, the truth, and the life*

The Lord tells us: *I am the light of the world; he who follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.* In these few words he gives a command and makes a promise. Let us do what he commands so that we may not blush to covet what he promises and to hear him say on the day of judgment: “I laid down certain conditions for obtaining my promises. Have you fulfilled them?” If you say: “What did you command, Lord our God?” he will tell you: “I commanded you to follow me. You asked for advice on how to enter into life. What life, if not the life about which it is written: *With you is the fountain of life?*” Let us do now what he commands. Let us follow in the footsteps of the Lord. Let us throw off the chains that prevent us from following him. Who can throw off these shackles without the aid of the one addressed in these words: *You have broken my chains?* Another psalm says of him: *The Lord frees those in chains, the Lord raises up the downcast.* Those who have been freed and raised up follow the light. The light they follow speaks to them: *I am the light of the world; he who follows me will not walk in darkness.* The Lord gives light to the blind. Brethren, that light shines on us now, for we have had our eyes anointed with the eye-salve of faith. His saliva was mixed with earth to anoint the man born blind. We are of Adam’s stock, blind from our birth; we need him to give us light. He mixed saliva with earth, and so it was prophesied: *Truth has sprung up from the earth.* He himself has said: *I am the way, the truth, and the life.* We shall be in possession of the truth when we see face to face. This is his promise to us. Who would dare to hope for something that God in his goodness did not choose to promise or bestow? We shall see face to face. The Apostle says: *Now I know in part, now obscurely through a mirror, but then face to face.* John the apostle says in one of his letters: *Dearly beloved, we are now children of God, and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be. We know that when he is revealed we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.* This is a great promise. If you love me, follow me. “I do love you,” you protest, “but how do I follow you?” If the Lord your God said to you: “I am the truth and the life,” in your desire for truth, in your love for life, you would certainly ask him to show you the way to reach them. You would say to yourself: “Truth is a great reality, life is a great reality; if only it were possible for my soul to find them!”

### The Older Son: Pride – Lesson and Discussion

*“the older son had been out in the field...he refused to enter the house”*

The story of the Prodigal Son is one of the most popular stories in the Bible. In the story there are essentially three main characters: The younger son, the older son, and the father. This lesson will focus on the older son.

**Why was the older son angry?** The older son was angry because he felt the younger son did not deserve such a celebration after blowing his inheritance, while he, the older son, had stayed with his father for so many years and received nothing.

### How has the older son erred by thinking he has received

**“nothing”?** As the father points out, as long as the older son stays with him, the older son has everything. The older son should examine himself and ask “why did you stay at your father’s house? Was it for the love of your father, or just out of blind service? Those who have remained at home are also to take part in the celebration; these have been faithful to their duty, but perhaps more through habit than from love, which has made them incapable of understanding the Father’s love for their brothers, incapable too of rejoicing in it and sharing in it. Thus they are also in need of pardon.”[1] Are we in our Father’s house because we love Him? If so we will understand that God has given us everything, and we rejoice when a fellow brother or sister returns from sin to grace. “We should also consider that if God has compassion towards sinners, he must have much more towards those who strive to be faithful to him. St. Therese of Lisieux understood this very well: ‘What joy to remember that our Lord is just; that he makes allowances for all our shortcomings, and knows full well how weak we are. What have I to fear then? Surely the God of infinite justice who pardons the prodigal son with such mercy will be just with me ‘who am always with Him?’”[2]

**What sin does the older brother commit?** The older brother is guilty of the sin of pride.

**What is pride?** Pride is “an inordinate esteem of oneself—inordinate because it is contrary to the truth. One is guilty of pride when he or she desires to be considered better than that person really is. Pride can take many forms: by taking personal credit for gifts or possessions as if they had not been received from God, by glorying in achievements as if they were not primarily the result of Divine goodness and grace, by minimizing one’s defects or claiming qualities that are not actually possessed, by holding oneself superior to others or disdaining them because they lack what the proud person has, or by magnifying the defects of others or dwelling on them. When pride is carried to the extent that a person is unwilling to acknowledge dependence on God and refuses to submit his or her will to God or lawful authority, it is a grave sin. In this case, the gravity arises because that person shows contempt for God or of those who take His place. Otherwise, pride is said to be imperfect and venially wrong. While pride is not the only sin, it can *lead* to all sorts of sins, notably presumption, ambition, vainglory, boasting, hypocrisy, strife, and disobedience. Pride strives for perverse excellence. It despises others and, depending on its perversity, even looks down upon God. The remedies for pride are a sincere knowledge of oneself, the acceptance of daily humiliations, avoidance of even the least self-complacency, humble acknowledgment of one’s faults, and prayerful communion with God.”[3]