

## PRAYING FOR PEACE & AN OPENNESS TO THE WORD OF GOD

4<sup>th</sup> SUNDAY OF LENT – 27 MARCH 2022



### WE ARE INVITED TO PRAY FROM OUR VERY DEPTHS

Today we are invited to pray from our very depths for

- Peace in Ukraine and Russia
- and that the Word of God will touch us deeply in today's Gospel.

### ROSARY FOR PEACE

Last night at 5.30pm, the Sorrowful Mysteries of the Rosary were prayed for peace.

- The Introduction was prayed in Samoan,
- The First Decade in English and the Second Decade in Tagalog.
- The Third Decade sung in Malayalam.
- The Fourth Decade was in Sinhalese and the Fifth Decade in Arabic.

Thank you for those who led us in prayer.

### MASS OF PEACE

At 6pm, the Acknowledgement of Country was followed by a 3-minute video projected onto the screen, of [Pope Francis praying for Ukraine](#).

Flowers were placed by two children at the statue of the Holy Family near that of Our Lady.

During the Prayers of the Faithful, we approached peace and reconciliation as a whole community, with people praying from different perspectives:

First Nations – Aunty Cynthia

Young People - Xavier

Science - Hanar

Education - Cathy

Governance and Law - Luke

Visual Arts - Allan

and Media – Peter.

Rosie and I led the first and third sections of the [Act of the Consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary](#). The second section was prayed by the whole community, with the wording provided in the parish newsletter.

The Eucharistic Prayer was one of the Reconciliation Eucharistic Prayers.

After the Communion Hymn, we were led in a song for peace called [A Prayer for Peace In Ukraine \(Irish Melody - Londonderry Air - 'Danny Boy'\)](#)



At the Dismissal, we sent out as peacemakers, to work for peace in our world.

#### [TODAY'S GOSPEL LUKE 15:1-3, 11-32](#)

Today's Gospel opens up a discovery of the way to reconciling relationships.

Sometimes this parable is called *'The Prodigal Son'*.

Some have called it *'The Parable of the Two Sons'*

or *'The Parable of the Father and Two Sons'*.

The scripture scholar J. Jeremias named it *'the parable of the Father's love'*.

Other suggested names have included *'the parable of the merciful father'*,

and *'the parable of the compassionate father'*.

We know the parable well.

Both sons need to repent -

- the younger son for his terrible behavior
- and the older son for his jealousy.

#### [The father reaches out to the younger son](#)

The younger son has wasted so much. He has hit rock bottom.

He is desperate, his motives are not perfect.

He plans his response, to admit his sin against heaven and against his father, so that he can get a job as a hired hand.

All the pain and disappointment that he has caused his father and brother.

In fact, he is not yet aware of the depth of his sin against the love of God and family for him.

It is all about him.

Yet he turns towards home, and is still far off when the father sees him and runs to greet him.  
The father is moved, filled with compassion.  
The father takes the initiative – to show his love.  
This translates the Greek word here for the bowels being moved.  
So much compassion that the body feels it.  
The depth of love is with the father, so full of mercy and love.  
The father embraces him and kisses him.  
The father calls for the best robe, a ring and sandals, a fatted calf for his son.  
The father is celebrating.

### ***The father reaches out to the older son***

The Older son is jealous and angry and refuses to join the celebration.  
He is resentful.  
He says *“that son of yours”*, he doesn’t say *“my brother”*  
He is jealous of the father’s love for the lost son.  
He has a huge chip on his shoulder. He refuses to be part of the father’s joy.  
He thinks it is all about him. He has been loyal but not gracious.  
The father comes out to search for the older son, who is not far away.  
He invites him to come and celebrate and rejoice.

The Gospel parable continues:

*‘Then the father said to him, “Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. But we had to celebrate and rejoice, because this brother of yours was dead and has come to life; he was lost and has been found.”’*

### ***Selfish Temptations***

Both sons are selfish in different ways.  
We can often be tempted to think that our lives

- are all about ourselves,
- about our stories,
- about our autobiographies,
- about our successes,
- about our achievements.

***Whereas we are really invited, humbly, to place God at the very centre of our lives.***

***We are called to place God, not ourselves, at the very centre of the local parish community.***

It is the father in the parable who runs to the younger son and welcomes him so graciously.  
It is the father who notes the elder son is missing and goes out to find him and to invite him into the celebration.  
The father is there to help them individually and together.  
***The father seeks the reconciliation of his sons with each other.***

The father is the centre.

The father says, *'All I have is yours.'*

We ponder this Lent in what ways, we are like the younger and older sons and the father.

Let us pray that over this Lent, we may remove any barriers to the love of God, and celebrate and rejoice in God.

Praying for peace between Ukraine and Russia, let us now pray the [Act of Consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary](#).

Father Gerry

Readings: <https://bible.usccb.org/bible/readings/032722.cfm>

We wish to acknowledge and thank the following people: Hamish MacQueen, Director of Youth Services, [East Anglia Diocese](#) for the beautiful and moving words in his musical arrangement, which is available at this YouTube link, [A Prayer for Peace In Ukraine \(Irish Melody - Londonderry Air - 'Danny Boy'\)](#) Hamish's daughter Trinity on vocals and on piano Ray Travasso.



PARISH OF ST. JOSEPH & ST. ANTHONY  
*Painting by Leopold Kupelwieser: The Heart of Mary*