

# The Living Word

Twenty-fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year C

11 September 2022

## First Reading Ex 32:7-11, 13-14

*The Lord relented and did not send the evil he had threatened.*

The Lord spoke to Moses, 'Go down now, because your people whom you brought out of Egypt have apostatised. They have been quick to leave the way I marked out for them; they have made themselves a calf of molten metal and have worshipped it and offered it sacrifice. "Here is your God, Israel," they have cried, "who brought you up from the land of Egypt!" I can see how headstrong these people are! Leave me, now, my wrath shall blaze out against them and devour them; of you, however, I will make a great nation.'

But Moses pleaded with the Lord his God. 'Lord,' he said, 'why should your wrath blaze out against this people of yours whom you brought out of the land of Egypt with arm outstretched and mighty hand? Remember Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, your servants to whom by your own self you swore and made this promise: I will make your offspring as many as the stars of heaven, and all this land which I promised I will give to your descendants, and it shall be their heritage for ever.' So the Lord relented and did not bring on his people the disaster he had threatened.

## Responsorial Psalm

**Ps 50:3-4. 12-13. 17. 19. R. Lk 15:18**

**(R.) I will rise and go to my father.**

1. Have mercy on me, God, in your kindness.  
In your compassion blot out my offence.  
O wash me more and more from my guilt  
and cleanse me from my sin. (R.)
2. A pure heart create for me, O God,  
put a steadfast spirit within me.  
Do not cast me away from your presence,  
nor deprive me of your holy spirit. (R.)
3. O Lord, open my lips  
and my mouth shall declare your praise.  
My sacrifice is a contrite spirit;  
a humbled, contrite heart you will not  
spurn. (R.)

## Second Reading 1 Tm 1:12-17

*Christ came to save sinners.*

I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has given me strength, and who judged me faithful enough to call me into his service even though I used to be a blasphemer and did all I could to injure and discredit the faith. Mercy, however, was shown me, because until I became a believer I had been acting

in ignorance; and the grace of our Lord filled me with faith and with the love that is in Christ Jesus. Here is a saying that you can rely on and nobody should doubt: that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. I myself am the greatest of them; and if mercy has been shown to me, it is because Jesus Christ meant to make me the greatest evidence of his inexhaustible patience for all the other people who would later have to trust in him to come to eternal life. To the eternal King, the undying, invisible and only God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

## Gospel Acclamation 2 Cor 5:19

**Alleluia, alleluia!**

**God was in Christ, to reconcile the world  
to himself;  
and the Good News of reconciliation  
he has entrusted to us.**

**Alleluia!**

## Gospel Lk 15:1-10

or longer form **Lk 15:1-32**

*There will be joy in heaven over one sinner who does penance.*

The tax collectors and the sinners were all seeking the company of Jesus to hear what he had to say, and the Pharisees and the scribes complained. 'This man' they said 'welcomes sinners and eats with them.' So he spoke this parable to them:

'What man among you with a hundred sheep, losing one, would not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and go after the missing one till he found it? And when he found it, would he not joyfully take it on his shoulders and then, when he got home, call together his friends and neighbours? "Rejoice with me," he would say "I have found my sheep that was lost." In the same way, I tell you, there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one repentant sinner than over ninety-nine virtuous men who have no need of repentance.

'Or again, what woman with ten drachmas would not, if she lost one, light a lamp and sweep out the house and search thoroughly till she found it? And then, when she had found it, call together her friends and neighbours? "Rejoice with me," she would say "I have found the drachma I lost." In the same way, I tell you, there is rejoicing among the angels of God over one repentant sinner.'



## Reflection by Nick Brodie

The golden calf remains a potent symbol for the idolatries of our own time. It represents our collective wilfulness dazzling us right to the edge of destruction. Our world is polluted by extractive industries and consumer greed, our focus on making and having shiny metallic things. Our society often resembles that of our spiritual forebears in the wilderness, busily inviting disaster. We stand on the precipice of a climatic catastrophe of our own manufacture.

But the core message in all of today's readings is that God is merciful, not vengeful. The scriptures are about salvation, not devastation. So, in this Season of Creation we may well wonder how our habits and mindsets contribute to our ecological woes. If we recognise our faults – including our ecological sins and omissions – might we find a path back from the edge?

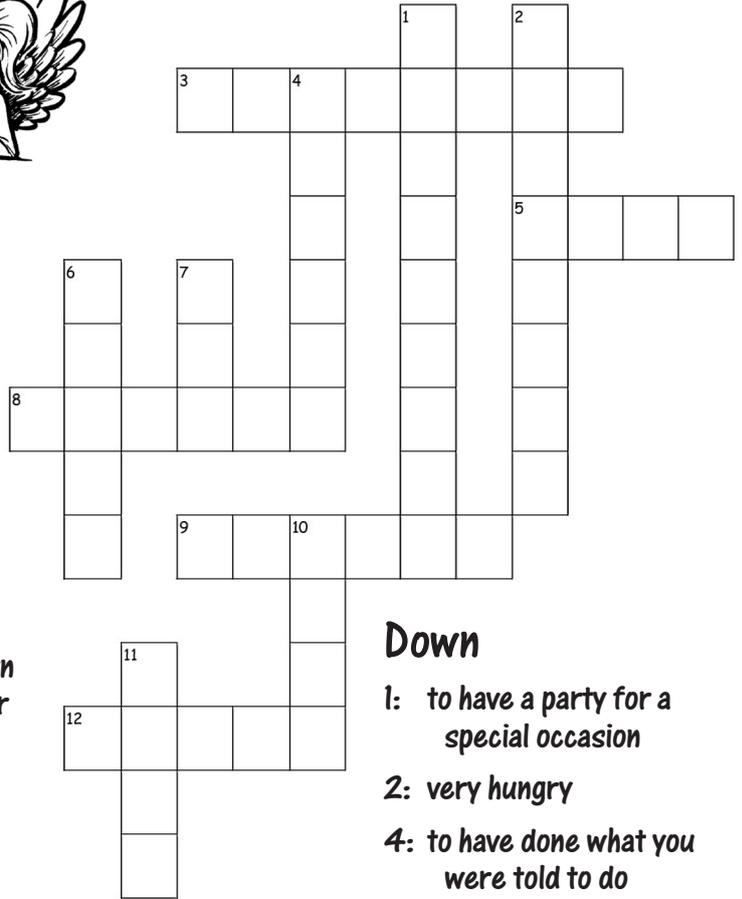
As Pope Francis so rightly points out, the present ecological crisis is really a social crisis, and each of us has a part to play in solving it. This does not mean we must be ecological rigorists or environmental moralists. Rather, we should become people who rejoice when right paths are chosen, who build on common sense and consensus, and who intercede where danger threatens the vulnerable.

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**S**t Cornelius was elected as pope in 251 AD; a time when Christians were being persecuted. He faced much opposition within the church over the issue of reconciling those who had distanced themselves from the church (apostates) during these dangerous times. St Cyprian was the bishop of Carthage. He supported the pope's view that apostates should be pardoned and welcomed back into the church. A few letters written by Cornelius to Cyprian survive today, including those which were written after he was banished from Rome in 253 AD. Cornelius died in exile most probably from poor health, although it was Cyprian who called him a martyr to the faith.

# Crossword



## Across

- 3: land that belongs to someone
- 5: jewellery worn on the finger
- 8: squandered, used poorly
- 9: asked for charity with humility
- 12: discovered

## Down

- 1: to have a party for a special occasion
- 2: very hungry
- 4: to have done what you were told to do
- 6: a person who has to work for no wages
- 7: consume food
- 10: happy
- 11: a parent's boys



## Complete the Text maze:

START

<b>H</b>	O	A	F	Y	U	H	K	T
E	W	H	T	A	N	O	W	H
J	A	P	R	N	D	R	S	A
R	S	S	T	A	E	E	B	T
G	L	O	F	S	N	F	S	U
O	A	C	D	P	T	O	U	R
D	P	Y	L	A	S	G	N	<b>D</b>

FINISH

"He was lost and now has been found."

