

Shrove Tuesday- February 21 2023

Acknowledgment of Land, Seas, Skies and Waterways

We acknowledge the First Nations peoples as the first inhabitants of the nation and the traditional custodians of the lands where we live, learn and work. We pay our respect to the Elders past, present, and emerging, for they hold the memories, the traditions, the culture and hopes of First Nations peoples across the nation. We acknowledge the deep spiritual attachment and relationship of First Nations peoples to this country and commit ourselves to the ongoing journey of Reconciliation.

Context- Shrove Tuesday

Shrove Tuesday has several monikers around the world. In French speaking countries it is known as Mardi Gras, in a growing number of countries it is simply known as Pancake Day and of course, Shrove Tuesday is still widely used. Shrove Tuesday is the day before Ash Wednesday and the beginning of Lent. Its association with pancakes refers to the emptying of fridges and pantries of extravagant foods in preparation for the fasting of the Lenten season. It is also a day for preparing ourselves spiritually for Lent. The use of the word Shrove to identify the day before Lent begins serves as a significant reminder of the spiritual preparation to be done. Shrove is the past tense of the verb 'shrive' which means to present oneself for penance. For many Catholics, penance can invoke feelings of discomfort, guilt or even shame; it's much easier to focus on the pancake aspect of Shrove Tuesday than open ourselves to the vulnerability of penance! Yet how can we enter into the desert with God and Jesus during Lent if we are not willing to prepare our hearts to be fully present?

Scripture- Luke 15: 1-3, 11-33

¹ The tax collectors and sinners, however, were all crowding round to listen to him, ² and the Pharisees and scribes complained saying, 'This man welcomes sinners and eats with them.'³ So he told them this parable:¹¹ Then he said, 'There was a man who had two sons.¹² The younger one said to his father, "Father, let me have the share of the estate that will come to me." So the father divided the property between them.¹³ A few days later, the younger son got together everything he had and left for a distant country where he squandered his money on a life of debauchery.¹⁴ When he had spent it all, that country experienced a severe famine, and now he began to feel the pinch;¹⁵ so he hired himself out to one of the local inhabitants who put him on his farm to feed the pigs.¹⁶ And he would willingly have filled himself with the husks the pigs were eating but no one would let him have them. ¹⁷ Then he came to his senses and said, "How many of my father's hired men have all the food they want and more, and here am I dying of hunger!¹⁸ I will leave this place and go to my father and say: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you;¹⁹ I no longer deserve to be called your son; treat me as one of your hired men."²⁰ So he left the place and went back to his father. While he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was moved with pity. He ran to the boy, clasped him in his arms and kissed him.²¹ Then his son said, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I no longer deserve to be called your son."²² But the father said to his servants, "Quick! Bring out the best robe and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet.²³ Bring the calf we have been fattening, and kill it; we will celebrate by having a feast,²⁴ because this son of mine was dead and has come back to life; he was lost and is found." And they began to celebrate.²⁵ Now the elder son was out in the fields, and on his way back, as he drew near the house, he could hear music and dancing.²⁶ Calling one of the servants he asked what it was all about.²⁷ The servant told him, "Your brother has come, and your father has killed the calf we had been fattening because he has got him back safe and sound."²⁸ He was angry then and refused to go in, and his father came out and began to urge him to come in;²⁹ but he retorted to his father, "All these years I have slaved for you and never once disobeyed any orders of yours, yet you never offered me so much as a kid for me to celebrate with my friends.³⁰ But, for this son of yours, when he comes back after swallowing up your [property](#) -- he and his loose women -- you kill the calf we had been fattening."³¹ The father said, "My son, you are with me always and all I have is yours.³² But it was only right we should celebrate and rejoice, because your brother here was dead and has come to life; he was lost and is found."



JESUS MAFA. Prodigal Son, from Art in the Christian Tradition, a project of the Vanderbilt Divinity Library, Nashville, TN. <https://diglib.library.vanderbilt.edu/act-imagelink.pl?RC=54662> [retrieved Feb 9, 2023]. Original source: <http://www.librairie-emmanuel.fr> (contact page: <https://www.librairie-emmanuel.fr/contact>).

Reflection by Kirby Will Project Officer Identity and Outreach.

The Parable of the Lost Son may be a familiar story to many of you and you may have heard many a sermon concerning it. I have included it in this prayer resource, not because it is the assigned reading for Shrove Tuesday (in fact, it is actually the assigned reading for the Fourth Sunday in Lent of Year C) but because its message is one of the hope and power of the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

In 2020, I came across an article written by Simcha Fisher for the Catholic Weekly. The main point of her article was to highlight her aim to teach the 8-year-olds in her faith formation class that confession is where we should go when we need help, not because we need recrimination. For many Catholics, we do not always remember to seek out the Sacrament of Reconciliation from a place of needing help - often we seek it from a place of shame and guilt. The younger son returns to his father knowing that he will get help but still there is a sense of immense guilt. That is not of importance to his father though. His father is so delighted that he has returned. He knows that the son has realised his error and is overjoyed to be in communion with him once more.

When we consider this, we need not approach our penance in shame and guilt. Instead, we should remember that our Father is ready to rejoice that we have turned away from whatever kept us at a distance from him and welcome us back with open arms. God is rejoicing that we have been found through our penance. May we be willing to join in the feast this Shrove Tuesday and hold that joy to sustain us for the next 40 days in the desert with Jesus.

Prayer

A great feast does not just happen- it requires forethought and action. Turn your mind now to forethought. What do you need to leave behind to be ready for the feast of Shrove Tuesday?

Remember, God is waiting to rejoice in you.

Take the time to consider what you need to leave behind for this Lenten season and ask for the grace to present yourself for your 'return' to the Father.

Call to Action:

- Turn your pancake making into a faith filled experience using scripture to reflect on fasting and fullness in faith with Beth Barnett's [Shrove Tuesday Liturgy for Making Pancakes](#)
- Use Simcha Fisher's '[Sheep Game](#)' to prepare your family for Reconciliation before the Lenten season begins.
- Help your children plan their Lent. Use this resource from the [St Paul Center](#) as a guide.



The Return of the Prodigal Son (Le retour de l'enfant prodigue) - James Tissot

