

**TWENTY-FOURTH
SUNDAY
IN ORDINARY TIME**

YEAR C

PRAYER OF THE DAY:

Forgiving God,
Jesus died
to wash away our sins.
We are sorry for all the wrong
we have done,
and we promise,
with your help,
to love you even more.
We make this prayer to you
through Christ our Lord.

FOCUS OF THE READINGS:

Both of our readings focus on the mercy of God. In the first reading, Moses pleads for his people, appealing to God's love already manifest in bringing the people out of Egypt and making a covenant with them. He acts as mediator between his people and God.

The Gospel tells us that God, imaged by the shepherd and the woman, seeks out those who are lost and rejoices at their finding.

Both readings reveal a God who loves us and wants to save us. We cannot save/find ourselves. Moses declares, "It was *you* who saved them." And Luke gives us two lovely parables in which God (the shepherd) seeks the lost sheep and rejoices when it is found. And it is God (the woman) who will not rest until the coin is found and rejoices when she finds it!

"Come and celebrate! The lost has been found!" God's loving mercy is always with us.

FIRST READING: *Exodus 32:7-11, 13-14*

A reading from the book of Exodus.

God said to Moses,

"Go and talk to your people,
for they have turned away from me.
They have made an animal out of metal,
and they are telling the people that it is a god.
Now they are worshipping that animal,
made out of metal, instead of me."

Then God said,

"These people are very stubborn.
And now I am angry,
and I am going to punish them for their sins."

Moses prayed for the people. He said to God,

"But these are good people.
It was you who saved them
by taking them out of Egypt.
You made a covenant with Abraham
and promised him that his people would be great
and would live in the land you would give them.
So don't be angry with your people now."

So God decided not to punish them.

The Word of the Lord.

RESPONSE: *Psalms 51*

RESPONSE:

In your kind-ness, O my God, have mer-cy on me, have mer-cy on me.

VERSES:

1. I know that I have sinned and done what is wrong.
2. O God for-give my sins and make my heart true.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION:

① "Come and cel - e-brate with me, [clap] for the lost has been
found," Al-le - lu - ia, ② "The lost has been found." Al-le - lu - ia!

GOSPEL: *Luke 15:1-10*

A reading from the Gospel of Luke.

When dishonest tax collectors and sinners came to listen to Jesus, the Pharisees and other leaders were angry. They said,

“This man, Jesus, talks to people who are sinners, and he even eats with them!”

So Jesus told them these two parables.

“Suppose you had a hundred sheep, and one of them got lost.

Wouldn't you leave the ninety-nine sheep that were safe and go looking for the one sheep that was lost?

And when you found it, you would pick it up and carry it home.

You would be so happy that you would call your friends and neighbors and say,

‘Come and celebrate with me because I have found my sheep that was lost!’

“Well, God is just like that!

And everyone in heaven will rejoice when even one person stops sinning and comes back to God.”

Then Jesus said,

“Now suppose a woman had ten very special silver coins, and she lost one of them in the house.

Wouldn't she turn on all the lights and sweep every room in the house until she found the coin?

And when she found it, she would be so happy that she would call her friends and neighbors and say,

‘Come and celebrate with me because I have found the coin that I lost!’

“Well, God is just like that!

And everyone in heaven will rejoice when even one person stops sinning and comes back to God.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

REFLECTING ON THE READINGS WITH CHILDREN:

After the first reading, the question of Moses' mediation is probably too complex to discuss meaningfully with the children. What is important is God's quickness to forgive. Help the children see that the people, in worshipping a metal animal (golden calf) was a way of truly denying God. They turned away from God who had done so much for them. We sometimes forget about God and make other things more important. Yet God is always ready to forgive.

After the Gospel: Help the children enter into the parable.

- Who do you think the “lost sheep” might be?
- Who do you think the shepherd is?
- Why did he rejoice?
- Who do you think the “lost coin” might be?
- Who do you think the woman is?
- Why did she rejoice?

Then help them see that God sent Jesus to look for those who were lost, those who had turned away from God or did not even know God. Jesus still looks for us when we turn away from God, and he rejoices when we are found.