



The Catholic Community of Divine Savior

Family Faith Focus

Volume 8, Issue 33

March 15, 2020

Dates to Remember

- March 15: Third Sunday of Lent — Children's Liturgy of the Word, 10:30 AM
- March 17: Memorial of St. Patrick
- March 19: Solemnity of St. Joseph
- March 22: Fourth Sunday of Lent — Children's Liturgy of the Word, 10:30 AM

Asking Jesus to Quench our Thirst

Jesus' thirst was not so much for water, but for the encounter with a parched soul. He needed to encounter the Samaritan woman in order to open her heart: he asks for a drink so as to bring light to her own thirst. The woman is moved by this encounter: she asks Jesus several profound questions that we all carry within but often ignore. We, too, have many questions to ask, but we don't have the courage to ask Jesus! Lent is the opportune time to look within ourselves, to understand our truest spiritual needs, and to ask the Lord's help in prayer. The example of the Samaritan woman invites us to exclaim: "Jesus, give me a drink that will quench my thirst forever."

—Pope Francis

Third Sunday of Lent

John 4: 5-42

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John.

Jesus came to a town of Samaria called Sychar, near the plot of land that Jacob had given to his son Joseph. Jacob's well was there. Jesus, tired from his journey, sat down there at the well. It was about noon.

A woman of Samaria came to draw water.

Jesus said to her, "Give me a drink."

His disciples had gone into the town to buy food.

The Samaritan woman said to him, "How can you, a Jew, ask me, a Samaritan woman, for a drink?"

—For Jews use nothing in common with Samaritans.—

Jesus answered and said to her, "If you knew the gift of God and who is saying to you, 'Give me a drink, 'you would have asked him and he would have given you living water."

The woman said to him, "Sir, you do not even have a bucket and the cistern is deep; where then can you get this living water?"

Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us this cistern and drank from it himself with his children and his flocks?"

Jesus answered and said to her, "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again; but whoever drinks the water I shall give will never thirst; the water I shall give will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life."

The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water, so that I may not be thirsty or have to keep coming here to draw water."

Jesus said to her, "Go call your husband and come back."

The woman answered and said to him, "I do not have a husband."

Jesus answered her, "You are right in saying, 'I do not have a husband.' For you have had five husbands, and the one you have now is not your husband. What you have said is true."

The woman said to him, "Sir, I can see that you are a prophet.

Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain;

but you people say that the place to worship is in Jerusalem."

Jesus said to her, "Believe me, woman, the hour is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. You people worship what you do not understand; we worship what we understand, because salvation is from the Jews.

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But the hour is coming, and is now here, when true worshipers will worship the Father in Spirit and truth; and indeed the Father seeks such people to worship him. God is Spirit, and those who worship him must worship in Spirit and truth." The woman said to him, "I know that the Messiah is coming, the one called the Christ; when he comes, he will tell us everything." Jesus said to her, "I am he, the one speaking with you."

At that moment his disciples returned, and were amazed that he was talking with a woman, but still no one said, "What are you looking for?" or "Why are you talking with her?" The woman left her water jar and went into the town and said to the people, "Come see a man who told me everything I have done. Could he possibly be the Christ?" They went out of the town and came to him. Meanwhile, the disciples urged him, "Rabbi, eat." But he said to them, "I have food to eat of which you do not know." So the disciples said to one another, "Could someone have brought him something to eat?" Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of the one who sent me and to finish his work. Do you not say, 'In four months the harvest will be here'? I tell you, look up and see the fields ripe for the harvest. The reaper is already receiving payment and gathering crops for eternal life, so that the sower and reaper can rejoice together. For here the saying is verified that 'One sows and another reaps.' I sent you to reap what you have not worked for; others have done the work, and you are sharing the fruits of their work."

Many of the Samaritans of that town began to believe in him because of the word of the woman who testified, "He told me everything I have done." When the Samaritans came to him, they invited him to stay with them; and he stayed there two days. Many more began to believe in him because of his word, and they said to the woman, "We no longer believe because of your word; for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is truly the savior of the world."

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

Sunday Gospel Connection: March 15 2020

The Third Sunday of Lent, Cycle A

John 4: 5-42

Gospel Background: On this Sunday and the next two Sundays, we break from reading the Gospel of Matthew to read from John's Gospel. The Gospel of John is the only Gospel not assigned to a particular liturgical year. Instead, readings from John's Gospel are interspersed throughout our three-year liturgical cycle.

In today's Gospel, the dialogue between Jesus and a woman from Samaria is among the most lengthy and most theological found in Scripture. The most startling aspect of the conversation is that it happens at all. Jesus, an observant Jew of that time, was expected to avoid conversation with women in public. The animosity between the Jews and the Samaritans should have prevented the conversation as well. The woman herself alludes to the break from tradition: "How can you, a Jew, ask me, a Samaritan woman, for a drink?" Yet Jesus not only converses with the woman, he also asks to share her drinking vessel, an action that makes him unclean according to Jewish law.



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The initial conversation between Jesus and the woman is better understood if we consider the importance of water, especially in the climate of Israel. At first, the woman understands Jesus' promise of "living water" in a literal sense: "Sir, give me this water, so that I may not be thirsty or have to keep coming here to draw water." With no running water, the daily trip to the well by the women of the community was of paramount importance. The women of the town would have traveled to the well in the early morning, but this woman came to the well at noon, the hottest time of the day. The timing of her visit is a clear sign that she is an outcast within the Samaritan community. We learn in her conversation with Jesus that she is an outcast because of her "many husbands."

Behind the conversation lies the animosity and rivalry between the Jews and the Samaritans. Samaritans shared Jewish ancestry, but Samaritans had intermarried with foreigners when they lived under the rule of the Assyrians. Samaritan religion included worship of Yahweh, but was also influenced by the worship of other gods. When the Jews refused Samaritan help in the building of the Temple at Jerusalem, the Samaritans eventually built a temple for themselves at Mt. Gerizim (the same mountain mentioned by the woman at the well). Like the Jews, the Samaritans believed that a Messiah would come.

The high point of the conversation is when Jesus reveals himself to her as the Messiah. His answer to the Samaritan woman's questions about worship is meant to predict a time when worshiping in truth and spirit will become the way to worship.

After the conversation, the Samaritan woman becomes a disciple. Even though she is an outcast and not a Jew, she returns to her town to lead others to Jesus and to wonder whether she has found the Messiah. The Samaritan townspeople return with her to meet Jesus for themselves, and many are said to come to believe in him.

The significance of the encounter between Jesus and the Samaritan woman has many levels. The first is personal: The woman is herself converted to belief in Jesus as Messiah because he knows her sin but speaks with her just the same. The second is social: Having come to know Jesus as the Messiah, the Samaritan woman becomes an evangelist to her own people.

The third level of the story is educational: Jesus uses his encounter with the Samaritan woman to teach his disciples that God's mercy is without limit. The disciples return from their shopping quite confused to find Jesus talking with a Samaritan, and a woman at that! But the conversion of the Samaritan townspeople is a foretaste of the kind of open community that will be created among those who believe that Jesus is the Messiah.

Family Connection: Lent is a season for repentance. It is a season during which we are called to reflect upon and to live deeply the promises of Baptism. The well and the conversation about water immediately recall for us the Sacrament of Baptism. As the Samaritan woman was converted and sent on a mission because of the conversation about water, we too are converted and sent by our Baptism to preach the good news of Jesus to others.

Take this opportunity to reflect upon the importance of Baptism with your family. If you have photos or other mementos of your family's Baptisms, bring them out and take some time to recall the day of Baptism and its importance to you and your family. Create a prayer table that includes these mementos and a bowl of holy water. After you have spent some time talking about Baptism, invite everyone to listen carefully and prayerfully to today's Gospel. Read John 4:5-42 together. Ask how Jesus' meeting with the woman at the well is like Baptism. (Jesus knows the woman's sin and forgives her. The woman comes to know Jesus as the Messiah. The woman invites others to meet Jesus.) Pray a prayer of blessing for each member of the family that God will help each one live the promises of his or her Baptism. Pray together the Lord's Prayer.

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For more information and Sunday Connection resources visit:

<https://www.loyolapress.com/our-catholic-faith/liturgical-year/sunday-connection/third-sunday-of-lent-cycle-a-sunday-connection>

FAMILY CENTERED FAITH FORMATION LENTEN FOOD DRIVE



St. Eulalia's, our sharing parish is beginning preparations for their summer program. They expect to serve about 160 campers.

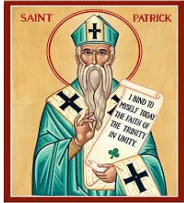
Below are some items that are in high need for this program. They are asking for our support.

ITEMS NEEDED:

Individual small bags of goldfish crackers, fruit snacks, animal crackers, granola bars, graham crackers, popcorn, Cheez it crackers, Ritz crackers, veggie straws, and small boxes of cereals.

Can you help by providing some items? The collection will begin March 14th until April 5th. Please leave items in the designated space in the vestibule.

Thank you for your generosity!



Breastplate of St. Patrick

Christ be near at either hand,
Christ behind, before me stand;
Christ with me where'er I go,
Christ around, above, below.

Christ be in my heart and mind,
Christ within my soul enshrined;
Christ control my wayward heart;
Christ abide and ne'er depart.

Christ my life and only way,
Christ my lantern night and day;
Christ be my unchanging friend,
Guide and shepherd to the end.

— Traditional Irish hymn



Prayer to St. Joseph

St. Joseph, Illustrious Descendant of David,
Husband of the Mother of God,
Foster-father of the Son of God,
in a dream you received from the Almighty
the task of taking Mary as your wife
and Jesus as your Son,

conceived from the Holy Spirit,
And of caring for them in the difficult
beginnings of the New Covenant.

Intercede for us so that your example
may remind us

To care for the presence of Jesus and Mary
in our lives,
in the trials of today's world.

— Blessings and Prayers for Home and Family

THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT



Living Water

Loving Savior, font of life,
you have poured out your living water
upon us,
filling us with your Spirit.
Cleanse our hearts when we are over-
whelmed by fear, despair, or disbelief.
Refresh us when we grow weary.
Drench us with your love and mercy

so that our hearts will overflow with peace
and we will immerse ourselves in justice and
reconciliation.
Engulf all who thirst for you in an onrush
of your grace
until we drink forever from the streams
of eternal life.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Sunday, March 15, 2020

This Is Better



Today's Readings: Exodus 17:3–7; Psalm 95:1–2, 6–7, 8–9; Romans 5:1–2, 5–8; John 4:5–42. When good things happen in our lives, we do not always welcome the changes. God freed the Israelites from slavery in Egypt and led them to a new homeland, but along the way the people complained. They feared the desert. They fretted about food and water. Although God protected and provided for them, the people claimed that things had been better in Egypt.

After Jesus offers living water to the woman at the well, she challenges him about this mysterious gift. She notes that he does not have a bucket and then she insists on the excellence of that particular well. Next, she laments the hassle of trekking back and forth for water. Only after Jesus

painstakingly convinces the woman that he is no ordinary Jew does she leave her water jar behind to accept the living water, the new life, that he offers.

St. Paul writes of all the good that has come to us because of God's love. Yet God's love is utterly unlike ours. God loves us simply because it is God's nature to love. We love people because of how they treat us or because they are related to us. It seems safer and more prudent for love to be earned. We struggle to accept the love that God has poured into our hearts. We still glance back at Egypt, clutch our water jars, and wonder if God's extraordinary gift is better than any other.



THIS WEEK AT HOME

Monday, March 16 What We Deserve

Naaman, thinking he deserved better treatment, nearly missed the opportunity to be healed. The people in Jesus' hometown also thought they deserved privileged treatment. They so resented Jesus' willingness to minister to others, they stopped listening to him. They even tried to silence the voice of God. Use Psalms 42 and 43 to pray in solidarity with those whom the world does not value. *Today's Readings:* 2 Kings 5:1–15b; Psalm 42:2, 3; 43:3, 4; Luke 4:24–30.

Tuesday, March 17 St. Patrick, a True Servant

How do you act in a crisis? Azariah admitted his sins and expressed his trust in God. St. Patrick, after being enslaved in Ireland, chose to return years later to share the Gospel. Azariah and St. Patrick admitted their need for God, but the servant in the Gospel parable remained selfish and hard-hearted. Sometimes once the danger has passed, we too return to our former ways. Read part of St. Patrick's Confessions and ask God to keep you faithful during difficult times. *Today's Readings:* Daniel 3:25, 34–43; Psalm 25:4–5ab, 6 and 7bc, 8 and 9; Matthew 18:21–35.

Wednesday, March 18 St. Cyril of Jerusalem

Jesus, like Moses before him, told people to uphold God's law in everything. By our obedience we become part of God's promised kingdom and reveal God's wisdom and goodness to others. In his homilies, St. Cyril of Jerusalem urged the newly baptized to heed what they were taught and to treasure God's grace so as to enter God's kingdom. Identify and pray for the people in your community who are preparing to become Catholic this Easter. *Today's Readings:* Deuteronomy 4:1, 5–9; Psalm 147:12–13, 15–16, 19–20; Matthew 5:17–19.

Thursday, March 19 St. Joseph, Faithful Provider

When Mary became pregnant in a most unexpected way, St. Joseph took her into his home and provided for her and her son. This legacy of St. Joseph continues in the story of his intercession on behalf of farmers in Italy who needed rain. When the rains came, the farmers celebrated with a feast they blessed and shared with the poor. Offer a special prayer of thanks for your food today, and share what you can with a local food pantry. *Today's Readings:* 2 Samuel 7:4–5a, 12–14a, 16; Psalm 89:2–3, 4–5, 27 and 29; Romans 4:13, 16–18, 22; Matthew 1:16, 18–21, 24a or Luke 2:41–51a.

Friday, March 20 Steadfast Love

In the passage from Hosea, God reveals his unfailing love despite his people's choice to carve idols and turn to other gods. The God of Israel proves infinitely patient and forgiving. Jesus reminds us that God deserves our complete devotion. Insofar as God shows steadfast love for us, we are to reciprocate by loving God as well as other people. What can you do today to show God's love to someone else? *Today's Readings:* Hosea 14:2–10; Psalm 81:6c–8a, 8bc–9, 10–11ab, 14 and 17; Mark 12:28–34.

Saturday, March 21 Painfully Aware

As the people in the First Reading return to God, the Lord knows that they will soon stray again. They might not even realize how faithless they are. They are like the Pharisee who is so self-absorbed he doesn't actually pray. We are called to be like the tax collector: deeply aware of both our sinfulness and our continuous need for God. Spend fifteen minutes today in silence, repeating the words of the Jesus Prayer: "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner." *Today's Readings:* Hosea 6:1–6; Psalm 51:3–4, 18–19, 20–21ab; Luke 18:9–14.

