

# St Luke the Evangelist, Blackburn South & St Timothy's, Forest Hill



## ONE MISSION, TWO CHURCHES

### The Journey Home

Third Sunday of Lent, Year A - 8th March 2026



Exodus 17:3-7, Ps 94:1-9, Romans 5:1-8

GOSPEL READING: **John 4:5-42**

*Meditation: Would you do a favour for someone who snubbed you or treated you like an enemy? Jesus did just that and more! He treated the Samaritans, the sworn enemies of the Jews, with great kindness and respect. The Samaritans who lived in middle region of Israel between Galilee and Judaea and the Jews who lived in the rest of the land of Israel had been divided for centuries. They had no dealings with one another, avoiding all social contact, even trade, and inter-marriage. If their paths crossed it would not be unusual for hostility to break out.*



When Jesus decided to pass through Samaria he stopped at Jacob's well because it was mid-day and he was both tired from the journey and thirsty. Jacob's well was a good mile and a half from the nearest town, called Sychar. It wasn't easy to draw water from this well since it was over a hundred feet deep. Jesus had neither rope nor bucket to fetch the water.

When a Samaritan woman showed up at the well, both were caught by surprise. Why would a Samaritan woman walk a mile and a half in the mid-day heat to fetch her water at a remote well rather than in her local town? She was an outcast and not welcomed among her own townspeople. Jesus then did something no respectable Jew would think of doing. He reached out to her, thus risking ritual impurity and scorn from his fellow Jews. He also did something no strict Rabbi would dare to do in public without loss to his reputation. He treated the woman like he would treat one of his friends – he greeted her and spoke at length with her. Jesus' welcoming approach to her was scandalous to both Jews and Samaritans because this woman was an adulteress and public sinner as well. No decent Jew or Samaritan would even think of being seen with such a woman, let alone exchanging a word with her!

Jesus broke through the barriers of prejudice, hostility, and tradition to bring the good news of peace and reconciliation to Jews, Samaritans, and Gentiles alike. He demonstrated the universality of the gospel both in word and deed. No one is barred from the love of God and the good news of salvation. There is only one thing that can keep us from God and his redeeming love - our stubborn pride and wilful rebellion.

What is the point of Jesus' exchange with the Samaritan woman about water? Water in the arid land was scarce. Jacob's well was located in a strategic fork of the road between Samaria and Galilee. One can live without food for several days, but not without water. Water is a source of life and growth for all living things. When rain came to the desert, the water transformed the wasteland into a fertile field.

The kind of water which Jesus spoke about was living, running, fresh, pure water. Fresh water from a cool running stream was always preferred to the still water one might find in a pool or reservoir. When the Israelites complained about lack of water in the wilderness, God instructed Moses to strike the rock and a stream of fresh living water gushed out (Exodus 17:6). Even though the Israelites did not trust God to care for them in the wilderness, God, nonetheless gave them abundant water and provision through the intercession of his servant Moses.

The image of "living water" is used throughout the scriptures as a symbol of God's wisdom, a wisdom that imparts life and blessing to all who receive it. "The teaching of the wise is a fountain of life" (Proverbs 13:14). "Living water" was also a symbol for the Jews of thirst of the soul for God. The water which Jesus spoke of symbolized the Holy Spirit and his work of recreating us in God's image and sustaining in us the new life which comes from God. The life which the Holy Spirit produces in us makes us a "new creation" in Jesus Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17). Do you thirst for God and for the life of the Holy Spirit within you?

Basil the Great (330-379 AD), a great early Christian teacher and Greek bishop of Caesarea, speaks in a similar manner: "The Spirit restores paradise to us and the way to heaven and adoption as children of God; he instils confidence that we may call God truly Father and grants us the grace of Christ to be children of the light and to enjoy eternal glory. In a word, he bestows the fullness of blessings in this world and the next; for we may contemplate now in the mirror of faith the promised things we shall someday enjoy. If this is the foretaste, what must the reality be? If these are the first fruits, what must be the harvest?" (From the treatise, The Holy Spirit)

Christ and the Woman of Samaria at the Well, by Il Guercino (Giovanni Francesco Barbieri, 1640), © Thyssen-Bornemisza National Museum, Madrid  
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Office (for both Churches): 17 Stevens Road Forest Hill Vic 3133 (St Timothy's)

Parish Office tel: 03 9412 8499; Presbytery tel: 03 9877 2292

St Luke the Evangelist, 46 Orchard Grove, Blackburn South

Email: foresthill@cam.org.au | Web: sttimothys.org.au / Email: blackburnsouth@cam.org.au | Web: blackburnsouth.org.au

**Parish Priest**

Fr Alex Chow

**Parish Secretary**

Sonya O'Farrell

Wednesdays,

Thursdays & Fridays

10am – 2pm

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**SUNDAY MASS**

**Saturday Vigil:** 5pm (SL)

**Sunday:** 8:30am (SL)

10:30am (ST)

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**WEEKDAY MASSES**

**Tues.** 6:30pm (SL)

**Wed.** 9.15am (ST)

1st Wed Mass of Anointing @10am

**Thurs.** 9.15am (ST)

**Fri.** 9.15am(SL\*),

6.30pm (ST)

**Sat.** 9.15am (SL\*)

\*Rosary after Mass

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**RECONCILIATION**

SL: Tues 5:30 - 6:10pm

Sat 9:45 - 10:15am

Sat 4:30 - 4:50pm

ST: Fri 5:30 - 6:10pm

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**EXPOSITION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT & EVENING PRAYER**

SL: Tues 5:30 - 6:30pm

ST: Fri 5:30 - 6:30pm

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**HOSPITALITY AFTER MASS AT ST. LUKE'S**

Second weekend of each month - bring a plate to share (optional)

**Young Adult Group -**

Third Wednesday of every month, at 7pm, at St Luke's Presbytery



**30 APRIL 2026**

*Thinking about life, purpose, and what really matters.* If you're asking big questions about faith or simply curious — you are very welcome.

**ALPHA Australian Edition, ALPHA Chinese Mandarin** (adults) and **ALPHA Youth** (ages 13–17) offer a relaxed, no-pressure space to connect with others, enjoy a free dinner, watch engaging short videos, and have honest conversations about life and faith. Come as you are, bring your questions, and see where the conversation leads. No pressure, no strings attached.

Email us at [Alphastlukesbbs@gmail.com](mailto:Alphastlukesbbs@gmail.com) or register your interest via the QR code  
We'd love to see you at Alpha!

<b>Next Week's Daily Readings 9 Mar - 15 Mar</b>
<b>MONDAY Mar 9</b> 2 Kg 5:1-15 Ps 41:2-3, 42:3-4 Lk 4:24-30
<b>TUESDAY Mar 10</b> Dan 3:25, 34-43 Ps 24:4-9 Mt 18:21-35
<b>WEDNESDAY Mar 11</b> Deut 4:1, 5-9 Ps 147:12-13, 15-16, 19-20 Mt 5:17-19
<b>THURSDAY Mar 12</b> Jer 7:23-28 Ps 94:1-2, 6-9 Lk 11:14-23
<b>FRIDAY Mar 13</b> Hosea 14:2-10 Ps 80:6, 8-11, 14, 17 Mk 12:28-34
<b>SATURDAY Mar 14</b> Hosea 5:15 - 6:6: Ps 50:3-4, 18-21 Lk 18:9-14
<b>SUNDAY Mar 15</b> 1 Sam 16:1, 6-7, 10-13 Ps 22: Eph 5:8-14 Jn 9:1-41
<b>FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT</b>

**ALTAR SERVING MINISTRY**

Are you interested in assisting as an altar server? If so, or if you have any questions about this ministry, please contact Chris Lim on 0419 470 267

<b><u>MINISTERS OF THE WORD</u></b>	<b><u>7 and 8 MAR</u></b>	<b><u>14 and 15 MAR</u></b>
Saturday 5pm SL Sunday 8:30am SL 10:30am ST	Catherine Koh Greg McKeown Molly Hemsley	Lucy Ferris Shirley Prabha Anne Lim
<b><u>EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS OF THE EUCHARIST</u></b>		
Saturday 5pm SL Sunday 8:30am SL 10:30am ST	Kevin Rogers Kana Chelliah Volunteer	Corey Thong Beryl Chelliah Chin L Tay
<b><u>SLIDE OPERATORS</u></b>		
Saturday 5pm SL Sunday 8:30am SL 10:30am ST	Choir Paul Tierney Lee Min Yee	Choir Rosemary Donaldson Manny Gonzalez
<b><u>SL WELCOMERS 7 - 8 Mar</u></b>	<b><u>SL CHURCH CLEANING</u></b>	<b><u>SL CHURCH FLOWERS</u></b>
5pm John Ryan 8.30am Janette Clark 10.30am Volunteer	14th March - Bianca's team Bianca Broccio, Shirley Prabha, Libby Theodore & Franca Leo	No flowers for Lent
<b><u>SL WELCOMERS 14 - 15 Mar</u></b>	<b><u>ST CHURCH CLEANING</u></b>	<b><u>ST CHURCH FLOWERS</u></b>
5:00pm Libby Theodore 8.30am Margaret Gearon 10.30am Volunteer	13th March Laura Cigana, Betty Digby, Trevis Yee & Ben Perera	No flowers for Lent
		<b><u>ST COUNTERS</u></b>
		This week Team 5: Anico Yee & Wilson D'Souza Next week Team 6: Barry Silvester & Chris Lim

## WE REMEMBER IN PRAYER

**All who are sick**, especially Brian Koh, Brian McHugh, Suzy Bookluck, Emilio Moreno Garcia, Kevin Ryan, Agatha Wink, Chris Leach, Dora Leung, Hazel Grealy, Josephine Alexander, Grace Dimattina, Kit Bing Fan, Kathryn Holmes, Stewart Davis, Mark, Margaret Hayes, Charmaine Bancroft, Marilene Japour, Paciencia Cabral and all those parishioners unable to be among us this weekend.

**All who have died**, and those whose anniversaries occur about this time especially Cecilio Abadilla, Armando Colasanti, Eloide Leonardi, Charlie Curmi, Noreen Kelly, Gerald Oliver, Frank Boyle, Dymrna O'Reilly, Karen Day, Noel Tenorio, Hermina Brysha, Anne O'Connor, James Russouw, Mary Rose Hammett, John Burns, Rob Davey, Geordy Hanley, Mary Benson, Mary Maguire, Jim Parslow, Marie Mullane, Paul Griffin & Mary Grealy. May they rest in peace.

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## POPE LEO'S PRAYER INTENTION FOR MARCH:

For disarmament and peace. Let us pray that nations move toward effective disarmament, particularly nuclear disarmament, and that world leaders choose the path of dialogue and diplomacy instead of violence.

## STATIONS OF THE CROSS FOR LENT:

**St Luke's, Blackburn South:** Tuesdays @ 5.30pm including confession & adoration, followed by 6.30pm Mass and Fridays at 3pm (followed by the Divine Mercy Chaplet)

**St Timothy's, Forest Hill:** Fridays @ 5.30pm including confession & adoration, followed by 6.30pm Mass.

**MERCY NIGHT:** Tuesday, 24<sup>th</sup> March at 7pm at St Luke's after the 6.30pm Mass. Come, reflect and experience an evening of God's merciful and forgiving love in God's presence. The Sacrament of Reconciliation will be available with visiting priests.

**PARISH & SCHOOL FETE:** Our first fete meeting was held on Feb. 19th and the plans are underway. Dates for the next two meetings are Thurs. 19<sup>th</sup> March and Thurs. 23<sup>rd</sup> April, both at 7pm in the St Luke's parish hall kitchen. **More volunteers are very welcome to join us**, as many hands make light work!

**SAFEGUARDING ESSENTIALS TRAINING:** All church volunteers must complete this training which can be done online via this link: [Safeguarding Essentials training module | Melbourne Catholic](#) Please email your certificate to the parish office when you receive it.

Resources ....

**MELBOURNE CATHOLIC:** [Lessons from 'a spiritual awakening' in France](#)

**MAJELLAN MEDIA:** [Christianity on the rise](#)

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## **STEWARDSHIP CORNER:**

*The First collection is for the priest and retired priests.*

*The Second collection is for parish expenses.*

Please note that collection totals will no longer be published each week in the newsletter. Presbytery and Church donations will be reported on a monthly basis at all weekend Masses. To donate regularly via envelope, credit card or bank account, please contact the parish office.

## Parish Groups & Contacts

### **Volunteers and Rosters:**

*Kelvin & Susan Chen (ST),  
Margaret Gearon (SL)*

**Baptism Preparation:** *Fr Alex*

### **Parish Collection Preparers**

*ST: Barry Silvester &  
Michael Kawalevski*

### **Parish Safeguarding Committee**

*Fr Alex, Sonya O'Farrell,  
Darren McLean & Janette Clark*

### **Parish History**

*SL: Margaret Gearon*

### **Parish Accountant**

*Bernard Negline*

### **SL & ST: Hall Hire**

*Sonya O'Farrell @ 9877 2292*

### **Church Sacristan**

*ST: Roster of Parishioners  
SL: Greg Grant*

### **Church Cleaning & Flowers**

*SL: Megan McLean  
ST: Susan Chen*

**Church Linen:** *SL: Beryl Chelliah*

### **Parish Garden Maintenance**

*ST: Des Connors & Leo Watson  
SL: Darren McLean*

### **Parish Choirs**

*ST: Miguel Ilagan  
SL: Fr Alex*

**Bible Timeline:** *Chris Lim*

**ALPHA:** *Lynda Kilroe-Smith*

### **Young Adult Ministry:**

*Sarah Santilli & Jersy Soesanto*

**RCIA:** *David West*

### **St Vincent de Paul Conference**

*For Assistance: 1800 305 330  
(Monday to Friday 10am-3pm)  
ST: John McCoy  
SL: Margaret Gearon &  
Steve Kilroe-Smith*

**Entrance Antiphon:** My eyes are always on the Lord, for he rescues my feet from the snare. Turn to me and have mercy on me, for I am alone and poor.

**Response to the Psalm:** If today you hear his voice, harden not your hearts.

**Gospel Acclamation:** Glory to you, Word of God, Lord Jesus Christ! Lord, you are truly the Saviour of the world; give me living water, that I may never thirst again. Glory to you, Word of God, Lord Jesus Christ!

**Eucharistic Acclamation:** We proclaim your Death, O Lord, and profess your Resurrection until you come again.

**Communion Antiphon:** For anyone who drinks it, says the Lord, the water I shall give will become in him a spring welling up to eternal life.

### CHILDREN'S LITURGY

**ST TIMOTHY'S:** Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> & 22<sup>nd</sup> March at the 10.30am Mass. This will run on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Sundays of each month.



**ST LUKE'S:** Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> March at the 5pm Mass. This will run on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of each month.



**PROJECT  
COMPASSION**

**Unite Against Poverty**

Please support Project Compassion 2026 through the donation boxes, envelopes or by scanning the QR code. Or online at: [www.projectcompassion.org.au/donate](http://www.projectcompassion.org.au/donate) Or by calling: 1800 024 413. Thank you.



On the third Sunday of Lent, Archbishop Peter A Comensoli will formally convoke a Synod for the Archdiocese of Melbourne.

The synod calls the Melbourne Church to journey together in communion, participation and mission, echoing Pope Francis' vision of a 'listening Church' (Evangelii Gaudium, §31). Informed by Vatican II's teaching, the Church is 'a people made one with the unity of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit' (Lumen Gentium, §4).

There are three themes about which the church of Melbourne is being invited to discern:

- young discipleship
- missionary leadership
- formation and participation.

The synod assembly will be held across the weekend of 4–6 December 2026. Over these next months, a range of opportunities will be available for Melbourne Catholics to be part of the consultation process toward the synod. In the meantime, further information can be accessed at [melbournecatholic.org/synod2026](http://melbournecatholic.org/synod2026).

In the synodal Church 'the whole community, in the free and rich diversity of its members, is called together to pray, listen, analyse, dialogue, discern and offer advice on taking pastoral decisions (ITC 68) for mission' (Final Document, §87).

### SACRAMENTAL DATES FOR 2026

**First Reconciliation** - May 26<sup>th</sup> & 27<sup>th</sup> from 3.30 to 5.30pm

**Confirmation** - June 25<sup>th</sup> @ 6pm

**First Eucharist** - August 1<sup>st</sup> @ 5pm

Parents of children who do not attend Catholic schools are asked to contact the parish office asap to enrol in preparation sessions for any of the above sacraments.



### LEGION OF MARY

The first Legion of Mary Praesidium meeting (Our Lady of the Mystical Rose) will be on Friday 27<sup>th</sup> March 2026 @10:30am.

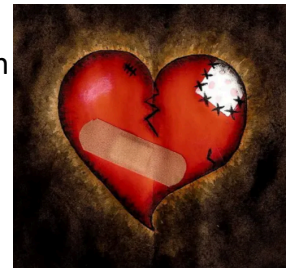
Please join us for 9:15am Mass at St Luke the Evangelist church.

To find out more, please contact Lucy Ferris at [lucyfe1112@gmail.com](mailto:lucyfe1112@gmail.com) or 0419 591 423.

### MERCY NIGHT

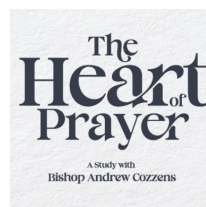
St Luke the Evangelist Church  
Tues. 24 March 2026

6:30pm Mass  
7pm to Adoration &  
8:30pm Reconciliation



Come, reflect and experience an evening of God's merciful and forgiving love in the God's presence and Sacrament of Reconciliation.

(Note: **NO 5:30pm Holy Hour on this date**)



In partnership with the National Eucharistic Congress, *The Heart of Prayer* is an 8 session retreat with Bishop Andrew Cozzens, offering contemplative, practical guidance from Scripture and the saints to deepen prayer, quiet the heart and help you to hear God's voice clearly. Login to Formed.org to watch this series today!

<https://app.formed.org/app/collections/1473553>

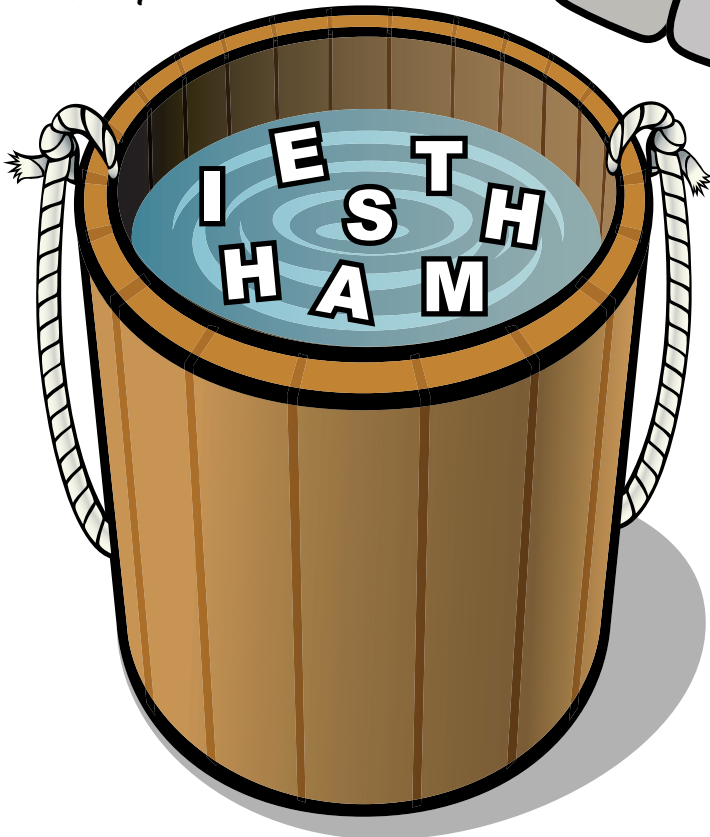
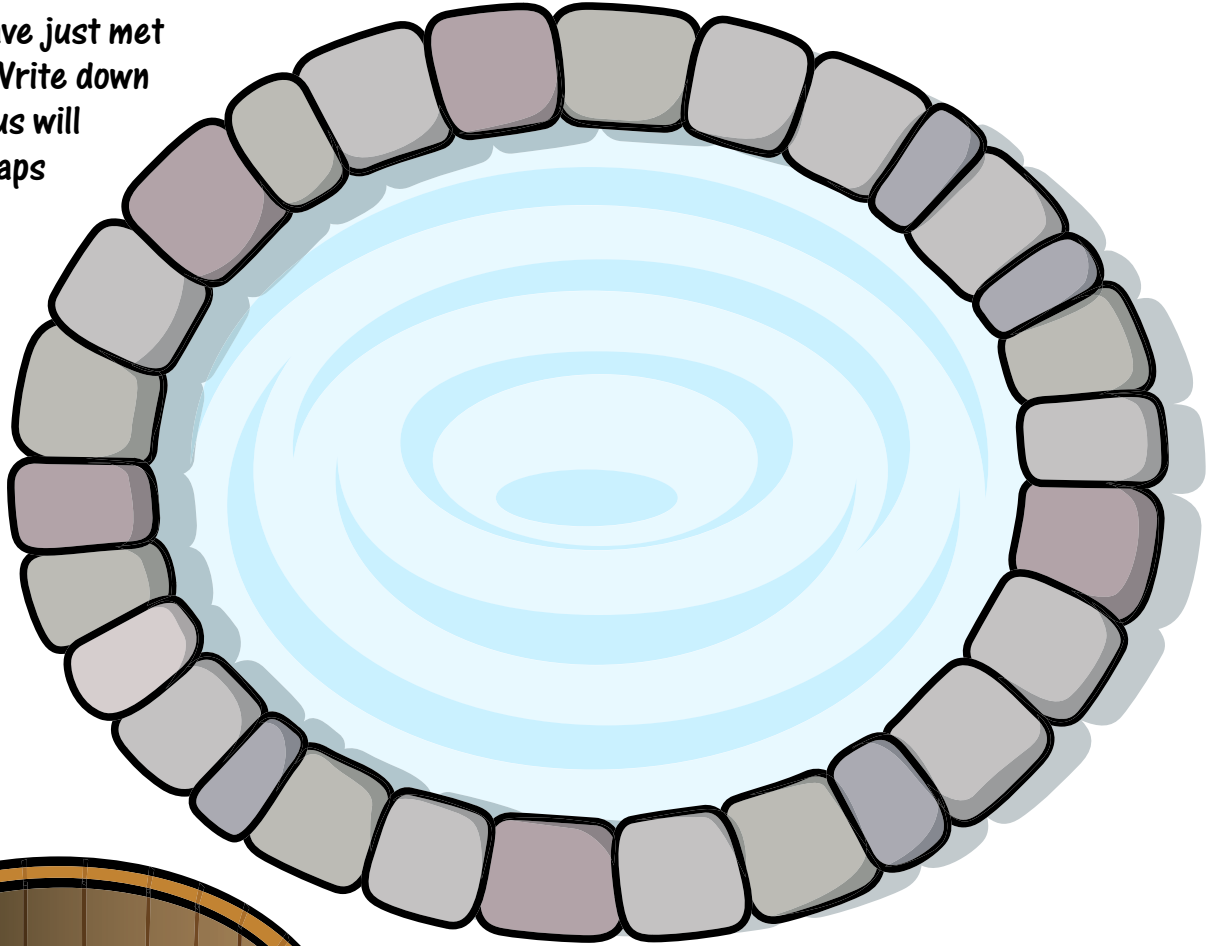


# I offer you life-giving water

3rd Sunday of Lent, Year A

Imagine that you have just met Jesus at the well. Write down what you think Jesus will ask of you, or perhaps share with him something that you are really in need of in your life right now.

Unscramble the letters in the bucket to reveal who the Samaritan woman discovered Jesus to really be.



The Samaritan woman led many people to believe in Jesus. How can we share our faith with others?

Three empty rectangular boxes for writing answers.

\_\_ \_ **E** \_\_ \_ **S** \_\_ \_

# THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT – 8 MARCH 2026



## COLLECT

O God, author of every mercy and of all goodness,  
who in fasting, prayer and almsgiving  
have shown us a remedy for sin,  
look graciously on this confession of our lowliness,  
that we, who are bowed down by our conscience,  
may always be lifted up by your mercy.  
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God, for ever and ever.  
Amen.

## READINGS AND REFLECTIONS

Over the next three weeks, we read three classic Lenten gospel passages from John: this week the Samaritan woman at the well, next week the man born blind, and the following week the raising of Lazarus. They explore the great themes of water, light and life. In fact, these Year A texts are so appropriate for our Lenten journey of conversion that they can be used every year.

This week's theme of living water highlights the baptismal dimension of Lent, not only for those preparing to be initiated at the Easter Vigil, but for all of us who will renew our baptismal promises. As we know only too well in Australia, water means life. The living water of the baptismal font means life together in Christ.

### A reading from the book of Exodus 17:3-7

Tormented by thirst, the people complained against Moses. 'Why did you bring us out of Egypt?' they said. 'Was it so that I should die of thirst, my children too, and my cattle?' Moses appealed to the Lord. 'How am I to deal with this people?' he said. 'A little more and they will stone me!' The Lord said to Moses, 'Take with you some of the elders of Israel and move on to the forefront of the people; take in your hand the staff with which you struck the river, and go. I shall be standing before you there on the rock, at Horeb. You must strike the rock, and water will flow from it for the people to drink.' This is what Moses did, in the sight of the elders of Israel. The place was named Massah and Meribah because of the grumbling of the sons of Israel and because they put the Lord to the test by saying, 'Is the Lord with us, or not?'

### Responsorial Psalm Ps 94:1-2, 6-9

**R.** If today you hear his voice,  
harden not your hearts.

Come, ring out our joy to the Lord;  
hail the rock who saves us.  
Let us come before him, giving thanks,  
with songs let us hail the Lord. **R.**

Come in; let us bow and bend low;  
let us kneel before the God who made us  
for he is our God and we  
the people who belong to his pasture,  
the flock that is led by his hand. **R.**

O that today you would listen to his voice!  
'Harden not your hearts as at Meribah,  
as on that day at Massah in the desert  
when your fathers put me to the test;  
when they tried me, though they saw my work.' **R.**

### First Reading

Moses led the people out of slavery in Egypt, across the Red Sea and into the Sinai desert. There the people complain to Moses that there is no water. They lose faith in God's providence saying, *Is the Lord with us or not?*

Well, God is with them and provides life-giving water when Moses strikes the rock of Horeb with his staff. This story opens up the powerful symbol of life-giving water in preparation for the gospel reading.

It is a vivid and dramatic narrative with direct speech and strongly contrasting emotions. God's intervention has a solemn dignity and should be read with deliberation. The text provides a delightful challenge for a reader with flair.

### Responsorial Psalm

Psalm 94/95 refers explicitly to the Exodus text we have just heard. It summons the people from complaining and grumbling to ringing joy and giving thanks. It calls us to acknowledge and adore the God who created us and who cares for us like a shepherd. Listen to God's voice! See God's wonderful deeds! Put away any hardness of heart!

The cantor/reader will need to take care to give proper cues to the assembly: there is a two-line antiphon and two five-line verses.

**A reading from the letter of St Paul  
to the Romans 5:1-2, 5-8**

Through our Lord Jesus Christ by faith we are judged righteous and at peace with God, since it is by faith and through Jesus that we have entered this state of grace in which we can boast about looking forward to God's glory. This hope is not deceptive, because the love of God has been poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit which has been given us. We were still helpless when at his appointed moment Christ died for sinful men. It is not easy to die even for a good man – though of course for someone really worthy, a man might be prepared to die – but what proves that God loves us is that Christ died for us while we were still sinners.

**A reading from the holy Gospel  
according to John 4:5-42**

Jesus came to the Samaritan town called Sychar, near the land that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. Jacob's well is there and Jesus, tired by the journey, sat straight down by the well. It was about the sixth hour. When a Samaritan woman 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, 'What? You are a Jew and you ask me, a Samaritan, for a drink?' – Jews, in fact, do not associate with Samaritans. Jesus replied:

'If you only knew what God is offering and who it is that is saying to you:  
Give me a drink,  
you would have been the one to ask,  
and he would have given you living water.'

'You have no bucket, sir,' she answered 'and the well is deep: how could you get this living water? Are you a greater man than our father Jacob who gave us this well and drank from it himself with his sons and his cattle?' Jesus replied:

'Whoever drinks this water  
will get thirsty again;  
but anyone who drinks the water that I shall give  
will never be thirsty again:  
the water that I shall give  
will turn into a spring inside him,  
welling up to eternal life.'

**Second Reading**

We are not judged to be sinners but as people at peace with God. This is grace, pure gift. It happens because of Christ and our response of faith to what Christ has done for us. In a lavish image, Paul says that God's love is poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit. The proof of God's love is that Christ died for us while we were still sinners. We don't have to get ourselves right so that God will love us. It is just the other way around.

This is a really important message to communicate to the assembled people. Paul has some great phrases to help us. But as usual he writes with long complicated sentences. Before attempting to read the text, study it carefully and underline the phrases you want to emphasise: *not deceptive... poured into our hearts... Christ died for us while we were still sinners*. Finish with an exclamation mark!

**Gospel**

The shorter version of the reading omits the lines about the woman's husband, the return of the disciples and the woman going to tell her story to the people of the town; these omissions are a pity. But then there is also a longish passage in which Jesus addresses the disciples about sowing, reaping and the harvest (which perhaps could be more easily omitted because it seems like a digression).

As he does on other occasions, John unfolds his narrative by means of a series of deliberate misunderstandings. Jesus is speaking about 'living water' – an interior spring, the Spirit, which brings eternal life. But the woman takes it at a concrete level: *You have no bucket and the well is deep; Give me some of that water so that I won't get thirsty and won't have to make these trips to the well*.

John is able to use the location of Jacob's well, the dialogue and the symbol of water to unfold the sacramental mystery of God's life-giving gift of the Holy Spirit. Here we find grace and true worship and Jesus is revealed as the prophet who introduces the messianic age.

In its final section the story moves to mission as the woman goes to the town to tell the people of her encounter with Christ. (This is where Jesus' discourse on sowing, reaping and the harvest fit in.) Then at the woman's urging and seeing her faith, the villagers come to Jesus and persuade him to stay for a couple of days. Many of them also come to believe in him.

'Sir,' said the woman 'give me some of that water, so that I may never get thirsty and never have to come here again to draw water.' ['Go and call your husband' said Jesus to her 'and come back here.' The woman answered, 'I have no husband.' He said to her, 'You are right to say, "I have no husband"; for although you have had five, the one you have now is not your husband. You spoke the truth there.'] 'I see you are a prophet, sir,' said the woman. 'Our fathers worshipped on this mountain, while you say that Jerusalem is the place where one ought to worship.' Jesus said:

'Believe me, woman, the hour is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. You worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know; for salvation comes from the Jews. But the hour will come – in fact it is here already – when true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth: that is the kind of worshipper the Father wants. God is spirit, and those who worship must worship in spirit and truth.'

The woman said to him, 'I know that Messiah – that is, Christ – is coming; and when he comes he will tell us everything.' 'I who am speaking to you,' said Jesus 'I am he.'

[At this point his disciples returned, and were surprised to find him speaking to a woman, though none of them asked, 'What do you want from her?' or, 'Why are you talking to her?' The woman put down her water jar and hurried back to the town to tell the people, 'Come and see a man who has told me everything I ever did; I wonder if he is the Christ?' This brought people out of the town and they started walking towards him.

Meanwhile, the disciples were urging him, 'Rabbi, do have something to eat'; but he said, 'I have food to eat that you do not know about.' So the disciples asked one another, 'Has someone been bringing him food?' But Jesus said:

'My food is to do the will of the one who sent me, and to complete his work. Have you not got a saying: Four months and then the harvest? Well, I tell you:

The passage ends with a triumphant assertion that Jesus is "the saviour of the world".

For us in Lent, the woman's journey to faith is our journey. The sacrament of water speaks of our baptism. This magnificent passage puts our baptism firmly into the realm of God's grace, the gift of the Holy Spirit, our mission and our participation in the reign of God.

Look around you, look at the fields;  
already they are white, ready for harvest!  
Already the reaper is being paid his wages,  
already he is bringing in the grain for eternal life,  
and thus sower and reaper rejoice together.  
For here the proverb holds good:  
one sows, another reaps;  
I sent you to reap  
a harvest you had not worked for.  
Others worked for it;  
and you have come into the rewards of their  
trouble.']

Many Samaritans of that town had believed in him on the strength of the woman's testimony when she said, 'He told me all I have ever done', so, when the Samaritans came up to him, they begged him to stay with them. He stayed for two days, and when he spoke to them many more came to believe; and they said to the woman, 'Now we no longer believe because of what you told us; we have heard him ourselves and we know that he really is the saviour of the world.'

[Short Form: omit text in brackets.]

# CONCLUDING PRAYER

## Prayer over the People (3 LENT)

Direct, O Lord, we pray, the hearts of your faithful,  
and in your kindness grant your servants this grace:  
that, abiding in the love of you and their neighbour,  
they may fulfil the whole of your commands.  
Through Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

And may the blessing of almighty God,  
the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit,  
come down on us and remain with us for ever.

**Amen.**

(Adapted from the Prayer over the People for 3 Lent, Roman Missal p. 262)



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2026

