

# The Living Word

## Third Sunday of Lent, Year A

### First Reading Ex 17:3-7

*Give us water to drink.*

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. v.8**

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

1. 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.)
2. 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.)
3. 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.)

### Second Reading Rom 5:1-2, 5-8

*The love of God has been poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit which has been given to us.*

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.

### Gospel Acclamation See Jn 4:42. 15

**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!**

### Gospel shorter form

**Jn 4:5-15, 19-26, 39-42**

*The water that I shall give will turn into a spring of eternal life.*

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.'

'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. I see you are a prophet, sir. 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.'

Many Samaritans of that town had believed in him on the strength of the woman's testimony, 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.'



### Reflection by Fr Michael Tate

The Jewish people worshipped at the Temple in Jerusalem. The Samaritans to the north worshipped on Mount Gerizem. But Jesus says to the woman of Samaria: 'Believe me, woman, the hour is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem . . . true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth.'

We do this by acknowledging Jesus Christ as *our* sacred site. Jesus is where God is to be found. In his earthly ministry this was around places like the well in Samaria. As Risen Lord, he is to be found in those in dire need, and in the Heavenly Bread. In both cases we need to incline the body as an act of worship: in the case of the needy, by doing something practical; in the case of the Heavenly Bread, by genuflecting, bowing, before the Blessed Sacrament.

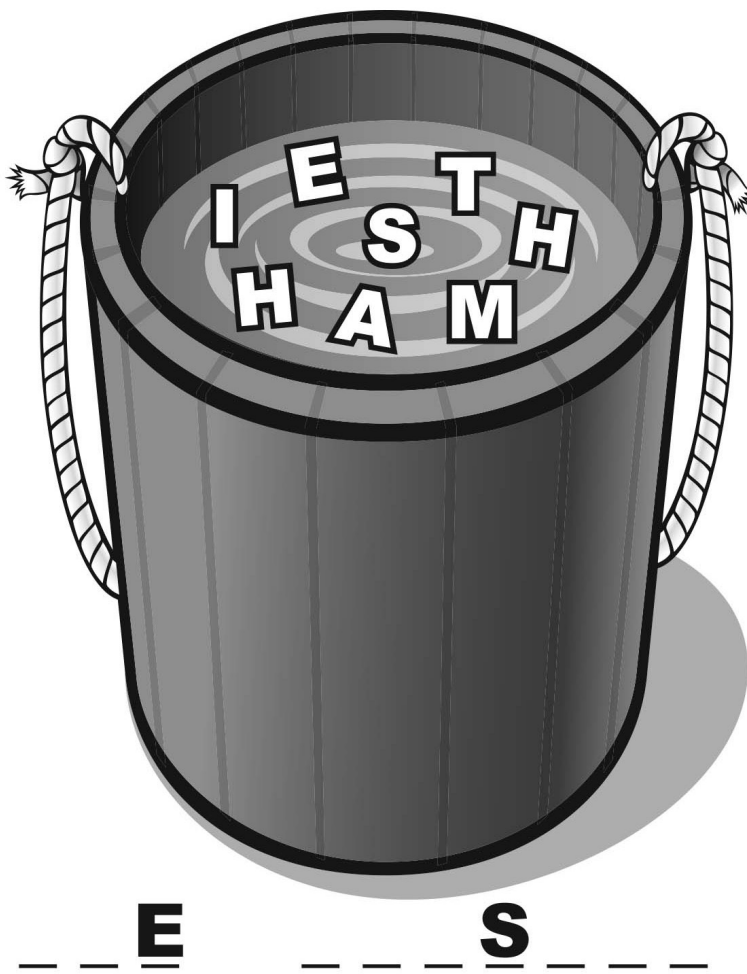
We could pause for a moment to reorientate ourselves to the Sacred Site who is the Risen Christ, acknowledging him as indeed the 'Saviour of the World'.

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**S**t Frances of Rome, born in 1384, was a noblewoman who dedicated her life to serving the poor and sick. Despite her desire to join a religious order, she married Lorenzo de' Ponziani at her father's wish. Together with her sister-in-law Vannoza, Frances began ministering to the needy in Rome. During the Great Schism, her family lost their wealth, but Frances continued her charitable work, even selling her possessions to help others. In 1425, she founded the Oblates of Mary, later known as the Oblate Congregation of Tor de' Specchi, a community of women devoted to prayer and service without taking formal vows. After her husband's death in 1436, Frances became the superior of the congregation. She was known for having mystical experiences and visions of angels. Frances died in 1440 and was canonized in 1608. Her feast day is celebrated on March 9.

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



## Wordsearch

Try to find these words:



- ancestor
- bucket
- drink
- food
- Jacob
- Messiah
- Samaritan
- Sychar
- town
- two
- well
- woman

K	N	H	Y	Z	Q	S	M	O	K	M	I	B	Y	V	R	L
F	O	I	F	W	I	I	N	M	T	T	S	E	M	U	H	Q
J	D	L	E	B	J	K	L	A	W	A	X	O	Z	W	Q	R
L	P	A	A	U	N	Q	B	W	O	X	H	J	Y	Y	Y	N
X	G	U	W	I	K	Y	L	P	N	A	A	N	C	X	V	M
M	K	N	I	R	D	T	E	L	I	C	O	Y	V	L	J	C
V	K	Y	D	O	I	L	Q	S	O	O	G	X	B	Z	X	I
X	M	U	L	D	X	Q	S	B	U	U	L	U	C	P	H	R
I	Q	R	D	N	G	E	M	S	W	Q	C	H	R	E	N	A
Q	G	H	Y	X	M	G	A	M	R	K	O	A	R	D	C	O
Z	L	J	D	J	N	W	I	A	E	E	O	J	K	N	C	F
R	I	Z	D	V	Q	B	U	T	W	H	E	C	W	T	O	L
Z	H	H	C	A	A	T	I	O	J	N	I	O	D	T	H	Y
O	N	A	T	I	R	A	M	A	S	T	T	U	J	O	A	D
M	P	B	H	O	J	A	D	D	R	A	H	C	Y	S	O	D
E	M	C	G	G	N	X	M	Z	R	J	Q	H	C	R	V	F
W	A	L	L	E	W	R	A	N	C	E	S	T	O	R	T	P