

THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT

First Reading: Exodus 17:3-7

A reading from the book of Exodus.

Tormented by thirst, the people bitterly complained to Moses, “Why did you bring us out of Egypt? Was it just to have us die of thirst with our children and our cattle?”

Moses appealed to YHWH, “What am I to do with these people? They are ready to stone me!” YHWH answered, “Go over there in front of the people, along with some of the elders of Israel; as you go,

hold in your hand the staff with which you struck the Nile. I will be standing there in front of you on the rock of Horeb. Strike the rock, and the water will flow from it for the people to drink.” Moses did so, in the presence of the elders. The place was called Massah and Meribah, because the Israelites quarreled there and put YHWH to the test, saying, “Is YHWH in our midst or not?”

The Word of God. R. Thanks be to God.

Second Reading: Romans 5:1-2,5-8

A reading from the letter of Paul to the Romans.

Now since we have been made right in God’s sight by our faith, we are at peace with God through our Savior Jesus Christ. Because of our faith, Christ has brought us to the grace in which we now stand, and we confidently and joyfully look forward to the day on which we will become all that God has intended. And such a hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has

been poured out in our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.

At the appointed time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for us godless people. It is not easy to die even for a good person — though of course for someone really worthy, there might be someone prepared to die — but the proof of God’s love is that Christ died for us even while we were still sinners.

The Word of God. R. Thanks be to God.

Praise to You, Jesus Christ, who reigns in endless glory!

or

Glory to You, Word of God, Jesus Christ, Savior!

*Christ, you are truly the Savior of the world;
Give me living water, that I may never thirst again.*

Praise to You, Jesus Christ, who reigns in endless glory!

Gospel Reading: John 4:5-42

A reading from the Holy Gospel according to John.

Jesus stopped at Sychar, a town in Samaria, near the tract of land Jacob had given to his son Joseph, and Jacob's Well was there. Weary from the journey, Jesus came and sat by the well. It was around noon.

When a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said to her, "Give me a drink." The disciples had gone off to the town to buy provisions.

The Samaritan woman replied, "You are a Jew. How can you ask me, a Samaritan, for a drink?" — since Jews had nothing to do with Samaritans.

Jesus answered, "If only you recognized God's gift, and who it is that is asking you for a drink, you would have asked him for a drink instead, and he would have given you living water."

"If you please," she challenged Jesus, "you do not have a bucket and this well is deep. Where do you expect to get this 'living water'? Surely you do not pretend to be greater than our ancestors Leah and Rachel and Jacob, who gave us this well and drank from it with their descendants and flocks?"

Jesus replied, "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again. But those who drink the water I give them will never be thirsty; no, the water I give will become fountains within them, springing up to provide eternal life."

The woman said to Jesus, "Give me this water, so that I will not grow thirsty and have to keep coming all the way here to draw water."

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

"I do not have a husband," replied the woman.

"You are right — you do not have a husband!" Jesus exclaimed. "The fact is, you have had five, and the man you are living with now is not your husband. So what you have said is quite true."

"I can see you are a prophet," answered the woman. "Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain, but you people claim that Jerusalem is the place where God ought to be worshiped."

Jesus told her, "Believe me, the hour is coming when you will worship Abba God neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. You people worship what you do not understand; we worship what we do understand — after all, salvation is from the Jewish people. Yet the hour is coming — and is already here — when real worshipers will worship Abba God in Spirit and truth. Indeed, it is just such worshipers whom Abba God seeks. God is Spirit, and those who worship God must worship in Spirit and truth."

The woman said to Jesus, "I know that the Messiah — the Anointed One — is coming, and will tell us everything."

Jesus replied, "I who speak to you am the Messiah."

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The disciples, returning at this point, were shocked to find Jesus having a private conversation with a woman. But no one dared to ask, “What do you want of him?” or “Why are you talking with her?”

The woman then left her water jar and went off into the town. She said to the people, “Come and see someone who told me everything I have ever done! Could this be the Messiah?” At that, everyone set out from town to meet Jesus.

Meanwhile the disciples were urging Jesus, “Rabbi, eat something.”

But Jesus told them, “I have food to eat that you know nothing about.”

At this, the disciples said to one another, “Do you think someone has brought him something to eat?”

Jesus explained to them,

“Doing the will of the One who sent me and bringing this work to completion is my food. Do you not have a saying, ‘Four months

more and it will be harvest’? I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields — They are ripe and ready for harvest! Reapers are already collecting their wages; they are gathering fruit for eternal life, and sower and reaper will rejoice together.

So the saying is true:

‘One person sows; another reaps.’ I have sent you to reap what you have not worked for. Others have done the work, and you have come upon the fruits of their labor.”

Many Samaritans from that town believed in Jesus on the strength of the woman’s testimony — that and “he told me everything I ever did.” The result was that, when these Samaritans came to Jesus, they begged him to stay with them awhile. So Jesus stayed there two days, and through his own spoken word many more came to faith. They told the woman, “No longer does our faith depend on your story. We have heard for ourselves, and we know that this really is the savior of the world.”

The Good News of Salvation!
R. Glory and praise to our Savior Jesus Christ!