



MARCH 12, 2023 | THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT

HOLY FAMILY PARISH

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Tazewell, VA 24651

ST. ELIZABETH'S
160 Merrick Lane
Pocahontas, VA 24635

ST. MARY'S
1122 Farmer Street
Richlands, VA 24641

ST. JOSEPH'S
1007 Independence Rd.
Grundy, VA 24614

Is the Lord in our midst or not?

“GOD, WHERE are you?” This was the question that was repeatedly dropping from the lips of a certain widow who lost three of her kids in a carnage while they were returning from school. A motorist suddenly lost control and rammed into the defenseless children who were holding each other and waiting for the right time to cross the busy road.

You may be asking the same question looking at your finances, relationship, marriage, job, education, plans, aspirations, and other things. Perhaps you have committed your situation to God in prayer, but no answer seems to be coming. You may have given up finally; you are in doubt if God exists. You are not alone, but you have a message from this reflection.

The people of Israel asked this question in the wilderness as the First Reading today tells us (Exodus 17:3-7). Let us quickly

point out the fact that the question came from their wilderness location. Geographically, the wilderness is a desolate and inhospitable place. Wilderness in this context represents a region of lack and needfulness.

The wilderness experience was so frustrating that the Israelites lost their cool and started to chide Moses for making them leave Egypt. They suddenly forgot that Egypt was torture and bondage for them. They suddenly forgot what God did to bring them out from the land of Egypt (Exodus 7-14). We are often like the people of Israel. We often forget all the good things we have received from God when we face one challenge or the other.

It is important to note that the people of Israel were rebelling against God, not Moses. Moses was God's messenger and servant. The accusatory question they asked finally confirmed their frame of mind: “Is the Lord in our midst or not?” This question is banal and amounts to an insult. Through Moses, God responded by giving them fresh water to soothe their thirst and those of their livestock. For their unfaithfulness, God remained faithful because He cannot deny Himself (2 Tim 2:13). For their challenge, God gave them a chance. For their sin, God gave them mercy and forgiveness. For their lack, God supplied all their needs (Phil.4:19). For their trouble, God gave them peace (Phil. 4:7).

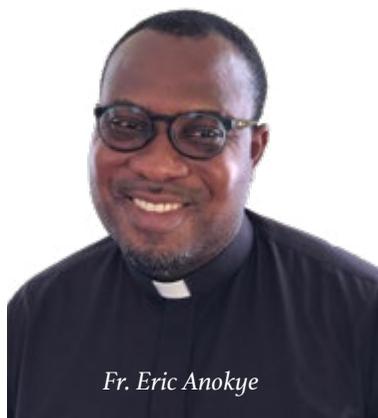
We ask the same question as the people of Israel when we have a disconnection from God; when we get lost in some wilderness like the woman in the Gospel of today (John 4:5-42). The unnamed woman in the Gospel shares some characteristics with the Israelites:

- They were both in need.
- They were both having a disconnection from God.
- They were both unfaithful.
- They needed divine intervention in their situations.

In the long discussion our Lord had with the woman we understand that she came to draw water from Jacob's well by noon time. Our Lord Jesus Christ was already there, and he requested water from her. She gave some religious and cultural reasons why she would not give water to our Lord Jesus Christ.

From the narrative, we can see that she, like the people of Israel, is stuck with the same question: “Is the Lord in our midst or not?” Her pattern of life does not present her as someone who is actively waiting for the Lord to come; though she is aware of the coming of the Messiah at some point per the books, it does not have a personal impact on her private life.

Her life was thirsty, not necessarily for the water from the well, but for the eternal water; the one that quenches our soul's thirst for God like a dry, weary land without water (Psalm 63:1).



Fr. Eric Anokye

The woman at the well represents most of us who mistake spiritual thirst for physical thirst. She represents most of us who are going about with “jars of water” looking for temporal water while there is an eternal water that will forever quench our thirst there before us. She represents most of us who are still asking the question: “Is the Lord with us or not?”

- The Lord is in our midst because He says the He is the Emmanuel (Isaiah 7:14).
- The Lord is in our midst because He says I will bless those who bless and those who curse you I will curse (Gen. 12:3).
- The Lord is in our midst because He promised that He would be with us wherever we go (Joshua 1:9).
- The Lord is in our midst because He says that we should not fear; He is with us (Isaiah 41:10).
- The Lord is in our midst because He says that He will be with us till the end of time (Matt.28:8).
- The Lord is in our midst because He says that even when we walk through the shadow of the valley of death, He will be there to comfort us with His rod and staff (Psalm 23:4).
- The Lord is in our midst because nobody can be against us (Romans 8:31).

Are you still in confusion whether God is in our midst or not? There is a challenge of faith here. In the Second Reading (Romans 5:1-2,5-8) St. Paul tells us among other things that faith justifies us when we have peace with God through Jesus Christ. Faith favors the faithful followers.

A good time does not indicate God’s presence and a bad time the absence of God. God’s presence is constant and unchanging. The problem is that we are often not with God. We depart from God when we embark on the journey into sin. We deviate from God when we, like the Israelites, lose our focus and blame God for our failures.

Now is the time for us to depart from the wilderness of quarreling and testing God and enter the region of trust and obedience to God. The time for that transition is today. The response to the Psalms says if you hear his voice, harden not your heart.

May this third Sunday of Lent enrich you with dependable graces to rise from despair to deep faith in God who is constantly with you in all the circumstances of your life.

Have a graceful Sunday and more graces.

PASTOR

Fr. Eric Anokye
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OFFICE MANAGER/ BOOKKEEPER

Lydia St. Peter

OFFICE HOURS

Mon–Fri 9:30AM – 2:30PM

Please call the parish office to make arrangements for the **Sacraments of Baptism, Anointing of the Sick or Holy Matrimony** as well as funerals. **Reconciliation** is available from 30 minutes before a scheduled Mass.

MASS TIMES

SATURDAY

4PM – St. Joseph’s
6PM – St. Mary’s

SUNDAY

9AM – St. Elizabeth’s
11:30AM – St. Theresa’s

TUESDAY & FRIDAY

10AM – St. Theresa’s

Cover image:

Judith Fritchman, *Living Water, The Woman At The Well*, 2008

Hospitality: Finding our way home

By John Cuddeback, life-craft.org



It is perhaps a sign of our times that we speak of a hospitality “industry.” Rooms-for-the-night and meals away from home can certainly be bought and sold. But hospitality is something no exchange of money will ever effect.

Hospitality is intimately tied with being human both historically and philosophically. We might say that as eating is natural to us so also is offering hospitality in and through eating.

We can discover three wonderful aspects of hospitality in the swineherd Eumaeus’s reception of Odysseus, whom he takes for a stranger.

“Come into the cabin. You’re a wanderer too. You must eat something, drink some wine, and tell me where you are from and the hard times you’ve seen.”

“You’re a wanderer too.”

We are all wanderers. Sometimes we work so hard to be comfortable in life that we can forget this great paradox of being human. We are wanderers, in some sense never fully at home. But then again, we make homes in and through which we come to understand what a home is, and what it means to be “at home.” In hospitality we have occasion to remind ourselves and our guests of this paradox.

“You must eat something.”

People are always hungry, or will be soon. That much we know for sure. In hospitality we have a blessed opportunity to acknowledge this commonality with

our guests, and, again, to enter this vulnerability as well as the gift that we are fed, and our needs fulfilled.

“Tell me where you are from and the hard times you’ve seen.”

Suffering is a signal and universal feature of human life. In hospitality we recognize this and express our will that no one ever be left alone in that suffering. We cannot avoid suffering; but we can work that people do not suffer alone.

Hospitality, then, both in giving it and receiving it, can teach us who we are, refine our moral dispositions, and draw us together with friends and strangers alike. In this powerful combination, hospitality—especially that offered in the home—is perhaps unique among human activities.

And it is right there for our choosing. This can become again a regular feature of our homes. How salutary for us and all in our household to offer our home as a home to others. The actions themselves might be small, seemingly insignificant, but the reality of hospitality is never insignificant.

I like to remind myself that doing simple, small things can strike a large blow for restoring truly human life. If that is so, then acts of true hospitality will be of incalculable significance.

Menelaus preparing to offer hospitality to Odysseus’ son exclaims, “Could we have made it home again...if other men had never fed us, given us lodging?” Indeed, will any of us ultimately make it home, except that we offer to one another what home we have here? In hospitality.

Want to pray the Rosary with your family? Start with a decade a day

By Fr. James Goodwin, simplycatholic.com

Many have heard the saying by the Servant of God Venerable Father Patrick Peyton, C.S.C., that “the family that prays together stays together.” The family rosary has been a staple of Catholic home devotions for centuries — and for good reason. It teaches us, especially children, the basic prayers of our faith. It covers the essential moments in the life of Christ, encapsulating the Gospel story. It helps us to start to spend time with God in meditative prayer. In short, the rosary is a wonderful way to ask for God’s help and Mary’s intercession.

However, many can find it difficult to pray the rosary. Attention spans seem to be shorter, perhaps due to the multitude of screens that surround us. Commercials every few minutes, video games and smartphones all contribute to problems with concentration. For many, silence can seem unnerving when we are constantly being stimulated. Add to that the noise of younger children, and praying a family rosary especially can be challenging. So how can you, and your family, pray the rosary together?

One way to be successful is to not try to start with a full, five-decade rosary. Instead, perhaps try to pray one rosary over the course of the week. You can pray at a family altar where images of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and Immaculate Heart of Mary are enthroned. Keep rosaries there for the children. Begin on Sunday with the opening prayers of the Rosary: the Sign of the Cross, the apostles creed, the Our Father, the three Hail Marys and Glory Be. Then from Monday through Friday, pray one decade a day. On Saturday, pray the concluding prayers: the Hail Holy Queen, final prayer, prayers for the pope’s intention, and the Sign of the Cross. Thus, over the course of the week, the family can pray one full Rosary while spending just a few minutes each day. Over time you can increase the number of decades prayed until you are praying the entire rosary on a daily basis.

This can easily be enhanced. Each family member can be asked for what intention they are offering the decade. You can add Scripture readings or introduce a relevant line from Scripture for each Hail Mary. You can use pictures, coloring books, spiritual meditations

or music. In addition, you can add other prayers for morning or night, or other devotions such as a litany or novena. Such devotions are a treasure chest of ancient Christian prayers just waiting to be rediscovered. At a time when many are attracted by “mindfulness,” we seem to ignore the long history of Catholic meditative prayer. There is an added bonus that praying part of the Rosary gains a partial indulgence and a plenary indulgence is granted to those who pray the whole Rosary in a family group. These can be offered for the deceased members of the family.

This manageable method is a great way to learn how to pray the Rosary and to make it a regular part of your family’s spiritual life. It will teach your children how Catholics pray. And it will bring your family together, making Christ the center of your home. It will help your family to truly become a “domestic church,” where your hearts are united, with Mary, to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.



mass intentions

Date	Intention
3/11 SATURDAY	
4PM	Holy Family Parish
6PM	Juanito Espeleta †

3/12 SUNDAY

9AM	St. Elizabeth parishioners
11:30AM	St. Theresa parishioners

stewardship of treasure

Donations Received as of March 5 (Week 36)		
CHURCH	ATTENDANCE	OFFERINGS
St. Joseph's	5	\$230
St. Elizabeth's	23	\$1,285
St. Mary's	16	\$1,460
St. Theresa's	64	\$1,392
Total	108	\$4,367
Outside Donations		
Year to Date Received		\$104,700
Goal		\$96,923
Ahead/Behind Goal		+ \$7,777

Thank you for your continued generous support of the **Annual Diocesan Appeal!**

So far, we have raised **\$3,935 of our \$7,790 goal.**



Scan the QR code to give securely online.

please pray for

Louise Serreno*	Michael Beavers
Gerry Hankins	Natalie Dodge
Clarence Moore	Roger Empson
Lexi Cox	Dreama Ritter
Sarah Wall	Marco Warner
Tammy Bennett	Chris Lambert
Margaret Wasilewski	Virginia Dy
Nic Ulate	Mary Muncy
Frannie & Rayburn Minton	Cindy Lambert
Sue Bailey	Jean St. Clair
Christian Lambert	Helen Petro
Shane Neal	Clinard Coleman
Archbishop John Kwofie	Joan Harrison
Pete Belcher	Joe & Yvonne Blevins
Lucas Boyd	Kyle Brown
Ralph Heldreth	Bobby Cole
Chris Jessie	Jeffrey Parkhurst
Leo Brown	Fr. Dan Brady
Carolina Ferrare	Sarah Walters
Junior Aiken	Everly Duns
Jeanne Hash	Amelia Proffit
Lara Marshall	Maurice Law
Carol & Jim Shumate	Zac Carter
Andrew Satmary	Dennis & Frances Savage
Glenn Harrison	Nancy Jo Testerman
Donna Petro	Donnie Neal
Christian Marshall	Josh Cornwell
Tina Rocchetti	John Shumate
Alice Godin	Seth Waddell
Randy Snyder	Doug Vance
Bryan Gunter	Russ Hatfield

council members

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Tonya Hylton, Frannie Minton, Ralph Shawver, Barbara Jones, Donna Lambert, Maria Farris, Debbie Parkhurst

FINANCE COUNCIL:

Kathy & Bob Buchanan, Randy Bolling, Doug Vance, Anne Danko, Jim Talbert, Jackie Shawver, Lydia St. Peter

parish news & events

- **Rice bowl** kits are still available at each church. 75% of your rice bowl money supports Catholic Relief Services' work around the world, and the remaining 25% helps fight hunger in our own community. Rice Bowl donations will be collected after Easter. All donations will be forwarded directly to the Diocese of Richmond.
- **Soup & Stations each Friday in Lent:** Throughout Lent, in addition to 10AM Mass, we will have 6PM soup followed by Stations of the Cross and Adoration. This is a great opportunity to build our community in faith!

MASS SCHEDULE FOR HOLY WEEK, APRIL 2 – 9

Thursday	7PM Tazewell
Friday	3PM Pocahontas 6PM Tazewell
Saturday	4PM Grundy 6PM Richlands
Sunday	9AM Pocahontas 11:30AM Tazewell

*Lord, you are truly the Savior of the world;
give me living water, that I may never thirst again.
- Jn 4:42, 15*

birthdays & anniversaries:

BIRTHDAYS

14: Pam Belcher | **15:** Paul Guliani | **18:** Barbara Jones

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(Pastor's Notes, cont.)

