

Wrapping It Up

Consider these points to conclude the discussion and reflection. Integrate the thoughts and ideas that surfaced during the discussion as well as the “Church Teaching Connection” on page 146.

Matthew uses Old Testament figures to reveal things about Jesus’ identity.

Peter, James, and John were some of Jesus’ closest disciples.

We are called to share all we have learned from Jesus and the Good News of his resurrection, even during Lent.

Act on the Word

Mountaintop Tents

For this activity, you will need plain sheets of cardstock or regular copy paper, clear tape, and colored pencils or markers.

Remind the teens that in the Bible, mountaintops were often the location of an encounter with God. Share with them that the phrase “mountaintop experiences” is often used in Christian circles to refer to moments of intense spiritual experiences and encounters with the presence of God. These might happen during a particularly moving liturgy, a time of prayer, an emotional experience, a retreat, and so on. In today’s Gospel, Peter, James, and John experience a mountaintop moment seeing Jesus transfigured. By building a tent, Peter wants to commemorate this event and to remain in that experience. But they cannot remain there. They have to come down from the mountain because Jesus’ journey to the cross is not done yet. We can’t stay in our mountaintop experiences either, but we can take what we experience there and bring it to our daily lives.

Divide the young people into small groups and have them share with one another some of their mountaintop experiences or things they have learned from those experiences. Caution the teens that because these experiences might be of a more

personal spiritual nature, some people may not be comfortable sharing and that is okay. They can share as much or as little as they would like to.

After giving everyone time to share within the groups, hand out the paper, tape, and coloring utensils. Tell the teens that they’ll be creating mountaintop tents. Have the teens orient the paper in a landscape or horizontal layout, and then fold the paper into thirds (from side to side rather than top to bottom). Once they have creased the paper at those folds, have them open it out again. On each third, the teens should draw their mountaintop experiences, things they learned from them, or the account of the transfiguration and what they learned from it. If they prefer, they could also write phrases or words associated with these things. Once their tents are decorated, have the young people fold them back into a triangular tent again, keeping the designs on the outside, and tape the edges together.

Encourage the teens to place their tents in their prayer space at home during Lent to remind themselves of their mountaintop experiences.

Closing Prayer

*God of all creation,
you love us and we stand in awe
of your majesty.
Grant us the grace to see your glory
in all creation.
Transform our hearts this Lent,
and make us ready for the celebration
of your Son’s resurrection.
Who lives and reigns for ever and ever.
Amen.*

For Next Sunday

To help teens prepare for next Sunday’s Mass, print, email, or share on a blog or social media the handout found on the next page. The JPG and PDF files are available at www.ltp.org/lwgr. Encourage teens to attend Mass with family or friends.

Read

Exodus 17:3-7

Psalm 95:1-2, 6-7, 8-9

Romans 5:1-2, 5-8

John 4:5-42 or John 4:5-15,
19b-26, 39a, 40-42



REFLECTION

Today's long Gospel reading is a powerful story about the transformation that can occur in our lives when we encounter Jesus. As Jesus engages the Samaritan woman in conversation, he reveals the depth of his knowledge about her. This divine transparency is an act of grace, a declaration that no aspect of her life is hidden from the one who offers living water, and that no aspect of her life changes the fullness of his offer.

The Samaritan woman's story reminds us that Jesus knows everything about us, and yet he offers us living water—cleansing and refreshing grace that transforms our past into a testimony of his redeeming love. The woman's recognition of Jesus as the Messiah sparks a chain reaction, transforming her life into a testimony that brings her community to Christ.

Today's Gospel prompts us to reflect on our own relationship with Jesus. Do we attempt to hide parts of our lives from him? We are encouraged to embrace openness, trusting in the transformative power of Christ's love. As we bring everything we have done and all that we are before him, we experience the salvation of his live-giving water, quenching the deepest thirst of our souls.

? QUESTIONS

- ❖ What do today's readings teach you about the Christian life?
- ❖ When Jesus reveals the Samaritan woman's past, it opens an avenue for grace. Can you think of a time that an uncovered truth enriched your life or relationships?
- ❖ How can we cultivate openness in our relationships with Christ and one another?

Third Sunday of Lent

March 8, 2026



ACTION

Challenge yourself to be intentionally open with a trusted friend or mentor about a specific area of your life. Share your struggles, joys, and hopes, allowing them to provide support. If you find this exercise fruitful, consider asking them to become your accountability partner, meeting regularly to share things you are struggling with and moments when you deeply feel the presence of Christ with you.



"Woman at the Well"

—Olivia Lane

<https://youtu.be/-Dzx9uNUOJY>

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.

"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. 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 who is speaking with you."

Many of the Samaritans of that town began to believe in him. 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."

Reader: The Gospel of the Lord.

All: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Everyone may be seated.

Reflect on the Word

When beginning the reflection and discussion about today's readings, first refer to the handout for today. Ask teens what they learned about themselves and about Christian discipleship from performing the action for the week and journaling. Ask teens about the readings of the day: What struck them? What do they think the readings mean? How do the readings affect their own lives? Then begin the following reflection:

From the outset, there are many obstacles to Jesus' actions in this reading. There were religious and ethnic differences between the Jews and the Samaritans. They had different practices of worship and were antagonistic toward each other (think about the story of the Good Samaritan who acted opposite of the expected behavior between the two communities). Additionally, John makes it a point to mention the time of day—noon—which causes the reader to wonder why the woman would have been out at the hottest part of the day instead of the typical practice of getting water at a cooler time of day. Not only do we the readers question these things, but the woman in the story does too.

► **What are some ways in which major differences between two people could make having an encounter or conversation difficult?**

The woman and Jesus have a conversation. Even though it is shortened for our reading here (the full reading is almost forty verses long!), we can see that it seems the woman and Jesus are talking about two different things. At first, Jesus asks for water, talking about the water from the well. Then he quickly moves into talking about a different kind of water, but the woman doesn't realize that. She is stuck in the concrete reality of needing to come and draw water every day. Gradually she comes to understand who he truly is, the Messiah. He alone can quench her thirst for eternal salvation because he is the fullness of that salvation. She shares that news with others, who also come to believe.

► What do you think young people in today's world thirst for at a spiritual level?

► How can Jesus, who gives living water, quench their thirst?

Just like the Samaritan woman in today's Gospel, we should go and share with others the Good News of the living water Jesus gives, so that they may come to believe. It is appropriate then, that although this reading is used in every Year A of the liturgical year (which we are in now), it is also used on this Sunday during the other years when there are people preparing to be baptized. It helps us all to make a deeper connection between what they are about to experience in baptism and the identity of Jesus himself.

Wrapping It Up

Consider these points to conclude the discussion and reflection. Integrate the thoughts and ideas that surfaced during the discussion as well as the "Church Teaching Connection" on page 150.

Jesus is the one who can truly satisfy us.

Our encounters of faith should change and motivate us to share the Good News of Jesus with others.

We enter into the waters of eternal life at baptism.

Act on the Word

Fill Your Cup Relay Race

For this activity, you will need clean kitchen sponges, large plastic party cups, and plastic bowls. The number of cups and sponges you will need will depend on the number of groups you have. Each group will need two cups, one bowl, and one sponge. You may also need tablecloths or some sort of table covering.

Have the young people help you clear the room so there is space to run from one side to the other. Then divide the young people into groups of three to five people. The more space you have in your room, the more groups you could have since there will be more room to run in. For each group, set up a relay station. Each relay station will include the following: On one side of the room on a desk, place a cup filled about two-thirds of the way full with water. (All the groups should receive the same amount of water.) Next to the cup place a sponge and

a bowl. On the other side of the room, opposite that full cup, place an empty cup on a desk. If you are concerned about spills, you could cover the desks with tablecloths or some sort of liner.

Tell the teens that they will be running a relay race with their teammates to see which group can fill the empty cups first. Players will line up next to their team's full cup. The first player will soak the sponge in the water, take it out of the water and run to the other side of the room to empty the sponge into the team's empty cup. Players should hold the bowl beneath their sponges to avoid dripping on the floor. Once the sponge is emptied, the player will run back to the full cup and pass the sponge to the next player. The next player does the same as the first, continuing to pass the sponge from player to player as the empty cup becomes full. Players may need to run the relay more than once. The first team to empty the full cup and fill the empty cup is the winner.

After the race, have a brief large group discussion about the ways in which sharing the Good News with others might seem like a never-ending task—one small sponge of water to fill an empty cup. But when we combine our efforts, the cups are filled and so are others who hear about Jesus from us! They want to meet him and believe for themselves, like the townspeople in today's Gospel. How can the young people work together in their efforts of evangelization to make a greater impact?

Closing Prayer

*God, who quenched the thirst of the Samaritan woman,
you speak in mysterious ways to your people.
Refresh us on our Lenten journey and
teach us how to listen to others
so that we may reveal your
marvelous and mysterious ways.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.*

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