

Read

Exodus 17:3-7

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

Romans 5:1-2, 5-8

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

LIVING THE WORD

Third Sunday of Lent

March 15, 2020



REFLECTION

In Lent we often think of giving up things to “become holier.” Remember, we cannot earn God’s love. God made the first move by dying for us before we were even born. St. Paul reminds us of this in the second reading when he says that Christ died for us while we were still sinners. In the first reading and the Gospel we also see God coming to his sinful people and giving them both physical and spiritual water to quench their thirst. If we rest in and simply receive his love, our sacrifices during Lent will flow naturally out of a place of love. Christ gave up his life for us, so any small sacrifices we make and unite to his sufferings are a response to that infinite love he had for us first. If this reflection feels hard to believe, spend time in quiet with God to let him tell you what he thinks of you.

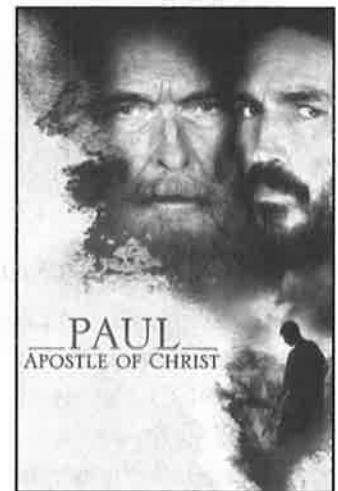


ACTION

In what ways do you need spiritual “water” like the woman at the well? Tune into the things in your life that need renewing or are difficult right now. You may not see it at the moment, but God wants to meet you in the midst of those difficulties, if you are open to him. What kind of spiritual thirst do you see in the world around you? Make a list of both personal intentions and intentions for the whole world, and do two things this week: (1) Offer those intentions to God in prayer each day, and (2) offer your Lenten sacrifices for those intentions.



Watch
the movie
*Paul, Apostle
of Christ*



? QUESTIONS

- ❖ What do today’s readings teach you about the Christian life?
- ❖ In what ways am I hiding myself from God? Where do I need spiritual “water” to quench the thirst I have?
- ❖ In what ways is the world in need of spiritual “water”? What would change if our world truly went to God to help solve those problems?
- ❖ How can I contribute to being a solution to the problems in the world that I see? (prayer, fasting, service, other actions?)



March 15, 2020

THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT

LECTIONARY #28A

Exodus 17:3-7

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

Romans 5:1-2, 5-8

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

Prepare for the Word

The following elements may be used by the catechist, teacher, or youth minister to prepare to facilitate today's session with teens. You may integrate this information into the reflection and discussion on today's readings.

Leader's Context

Every soul is created with an inherent desire to know God. Some may describe this as a God-shaped home in our hearts. Every soul thirsts for God, and Jesus has the water of Everlasting Life that will quench the thirst people have for their Lord God. This water, this grace from Jesus, gives us wholeness and relationship with our Lord.

Q **FOCUS:** *Created to crave and need God, we search for him.*

Liturgical Calendar Connection

Using the liturgical calendar, find today's date. Note how many Sundays remain in Lent. Learn which days this week contain observances, specifically St. Joseph and St. Patrick. Show the young people where the calendar notes the Scrutinies, and explain how the Scrutinies are part of RCIA.

Church Teaching Connection

"The human virtues are rooted in the theological virtues, which adapt man's faculties for participation in the divine nature: for the theological virtues relate directly to God. They dispose Christians to live in a relationship with the Holy Trinity. They have the One and Triune God for their origin, motive, and object" (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1812; referencing 2 Peter 1:4).

Hear the Word

Use this resource, a Lectionary, or a Bible to proclaim the reading. The book should be held reverently or placed on a lectern. If possible, light a candle that is placed near where the Gospel will be proclaimed. Gesture for teens to stand.

Gospel Acclamation

Use the same musical setting that is used in your parish or at school Masses. Teens may help with music and proclaim the Gospel.

Glory to you, O Word of God, Lord Jesus Christ!

Gospel

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

Reader: A reading from the holy Gospel according to John.

All: Glory to you, O Lord.

All make the Sign of the Cross on their forehead, lips, and heart.

Jesus came to a town of Samaria called Sychar, near the plot of land that Jacob had given to his son Joseph. Jacob's well was there. Jesus, tired from his journey, sat down there at the well. It was about noon.

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:

Imagine the thirstiest you've ever been.

- ▶ How did it physically feel to you?
- ▶ Was your mouth dry?
- ▶ Did you feel dizzy and desperate for water?
- ▶ Did thinking about obtaining a drink consume your every thought?

▶ Did you wonder if you might not stop drinking some water once you obtained it?

Most of us have experienced some level of physical thirst. What we need to recall is that our souls have an even stronger thirst for Jesus. Our souls are created to be thirsty for God as our bodies are thirsty for water.

▶ What does it mean that we “thirst” for God?

It means that without God, our souls are lacking; without him, our souls are missing something that creates wholeness in our deepest selves. We thirst for God because we desire to be near to him. God created our hearts to crave him. As St. Augustine famously said in his *Confessions* (an autobiography or memoir), “Thou hast made us for thyself, O Lord, and our heart is restless until it finds its rest in thee.” Essentially, Augustine meant that our hearts search until they are contented in God, and only then can the heart cease restlessness.

Ancient Jews considered Samaritans to be unsavory people—a Samaritan person and Jewish person of Jesus' time would not typically have conversed. In Jesus' time men and women also would not have conversed with one another unless they were related by blood or marriage. Jesus, however, spoke to the Samaritan woman and asked her for water. To the Samaritan woman, and indeed any bystander that might have witnessed the exchange, there must have been a sensation of scandal. A Jewish man talking to a Samaritan woman was extremely odd and even disreputable in Jesus' time! In the story, the water request leads to Jesus telling the Samaritan woman about the water that quenches thirst forever—the water that Jesus alone can give.

▶ How does Jesus quench your thirst?

The Samaritan woman knew physical thirst and spiritual thirst. Living in the biblical age in the holy land, water would have been a precious commodity to her. Each time water was needed for drinking, cooking or cleaning, a trip had to be made to a well, water drawn, transferred to her own vessel, and carried home. When Jesus told the Samaritan woman that he could give water that quenched thirst permanently, she wanted this water. She also called Jesus a prophet, and Jesus revealed to her that he was the Messiah. The

Samaritan woman had a deep yearning in her heart that only the Living Water than is Jesus could fill.

► How do you yearn for Jesus?

This same yearning is in all of our souls. The yearning changes as we grow and mature, but in its essence stays the same: the human heart needs and craves God. Our souls thirst for God. Jesus is the one who can give us the water that will quench the thirst of our souls. We should always understand our deep need and thirst for God and the salvation Jesus offers humanity, but especially during Lent we respond to the gift that Jesus gives us—his love, his grace, his friendship, his salvation—all of which satisfy the thirst our souls have for God.

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 154.

How do you experience thirst for God?

How do we respond to the Living Water that Jesus gives us? How can we share that Living Water with others?

How can you experience Christ's living water during a time that may feel dry?

Act on the Word

Lectio Divina

Lectio Divina is an ancient form of prayer, meditation and encountering Scripture. The Latin phrase *Lectio Divina* means holy reading, and this form of prayer was used in the early centuries of the Church. Teach the young people this prayer form by first explaining the steps of the prayer. The main steps of *Lectio Divina* are as follows:

- ✧ Quiet the environment, the body and the mind.
- ✧ Read the selected Scripture passage slowly. (Use a passage from today's Gospel reading.)
- ✧ Pause for reflection, and read the passage again.
- ✧ Pause for reflection and read the passage a third time.

- ✧ Initiate discussion in small groups. Ask the students to discuss the words that drew their attention, how they connected with various aspects of the reading, and how they are called to act on what they learn about the reading.

Making a String of Sacrifice Beads

To find instructions on how to make strings of sacrifice beads, conduct a simple web search using the key words, "sacrifice beads craft." The instructions are quite simple. Print enough instruction copies so that students may share with another person. Before teaching the young people to make the bead craft, tell them a little bit about St. Thérèse of the Child Jesus as detailed below.

Long ago in France, St. Thérèse was young girl who desired to be a saint. She coined what we call "the little way," essentially teaching us that small sacrifices offered in great love are pleasing to God, are good for others and benefit our own spiritual growth. St. Thérèse did not risk her life in foreign missions or work her fingers to the bone caring for the poor; she cared for all those around her, thanking God for the opportunity to grow in her love of those closest to her in life. As a young person, she made sacrifice beads. This row of beads are double strung so that a person can use them as a tally of sorts. The young saint used the beads to count sacrifices she made for others.

Closing Prayer

*Loving Father,
you cleansed our sins in water
and made us a new creation in you.
Renew us again this Lent,
making our lives fertile and fruitful,
and providing us spirts ready to do your will.
Through Christ our Lord.
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.