



THE SAVING WORD

THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT / A

15 MARCH 2020

FIRST READING

Ex 17:3-7

A reading from the book of Exodus

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?'

■ The word of the Lord.

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

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Romans

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.

■ The word of the Lord.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

cf. 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

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

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John.

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:

Reflections on the Gospel

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' said the woman. '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 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
when she said, 'He told me all I have ever done,'
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.'

■ The Gospel of the Lord.

Longer form 4:5-42

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LIVING WATER

Weary from his journey, Jesus requests a
Samaritan woman to give him a drink from
the water she has drawn from the well. When
she expresses her surprise at this breach of the
cultural and ethnic barrier between Jews and
Samaritans, Jesus begins to convince her that
he has a far greater gift to give her: not the inert
water of a well but 'living water', the kind of
water that gushes up continually from a spring.

What Jesus is referring to in this symbolic way
is the gift of the Spirit.

The woman half grasps his meaning but can
go no further. Like all who reach a certain
stage in the spiritual life, her knowledge of
Jesus cannot go forward until the truth of her
own life has been owned and set on the way to
healing. That is why Jesus tells her, 'Go, call
your husband'.

Jesus' knowledge of her personal life leads the
woman to recognise him as a prophet. So she
brings up the subject of worship, a key matter
of dispute between Jews and her own people.

Jesus goes on to speak of a 'worship'
transcending these divisions: a worship of
God from hearts transformed by the Spirit of
truth, the kind of worship to which Jesus is
gently leading her.

Later, the woman will exclaim to her
townsfolk 'Come and see a man who has told
me the story of my life'. The encounter with



Jesus has not only
brought meaning to
her life. It has made
her a missionary
to her people,
transcending social
and ethnic divisions.

Brendan Byrne, SJ



ST MICHAEL'S CATHOLIC PARISH

Nelson Bay

Diocese of Maitland - Newcastle

We acknowledge the Worimi people - the traditional custodians of this place

PARISH CONTACTS

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Office Hours Tuesday to Friday
9:30am to 3:00pm

MASSES AND PRAYERS REQUESTED:

We remember and pray for those who are ill at home and in hospital at this time, may they know the healing presence of Christ: **John Lordanie**

Anniversary: **Dorothy Irene Harris, Sheilah Carey, Jack Allen, Jose Gacutan, Maria Gacutan, Alice Smith**

Recently Deceased: **Archbishop John Bathersby**

Masses will be offered on request. Due to privacy laws, names of the sick and deceased can only be put in the bulletin with the permission of the immediate family.

Coronavirus COVID-19

In light of the current concerns the Diocese of Maitland -Newcastle is observing the following precautions until further notice.

Holy Water is to be temporarily removed from stoups at the doors of the churches to reduce the possibility of transmission of the virus. Holy Water will continue to be available for people to take home, by bringing their own container, to collect holy water. Hand sanitiser available at the church entrances.

If you choose the option for the Sign of Peace, individuals should avoid shaking hands but say "Peace be with you" and offer a smile, wave, nod or bow.

Holy Communion will not be distributed from the Chalice until further notice. The Faithful are reminded that Christ is fully present under either species. Holy Communion is not to be given on the tongue.

For those Ministers who take communion to the sick, in hospitals, aged care facilities, or people's homes, they should also follow the advice of local health authorities. For those too unwell to attend Sunday Mass - or are at particular risk of contracting the COVID-19 virus, can honour their Sunday obligation by participating in a time of prayer within the home, reading the Scriptures or watching Mass on television or online (<http://bit.ly/MassOnDemand>).

More details on these measures can be found on the letter from the Bishop on the back table. You are encouraged to take a letter to read.

Leadership and the Parish Community

The meeting, commencing at 9.30am on Saturday 21 March, will be facilitated by Father Matthew Muller - Chancellor Maitland-Newcastle Diocese. The Parish meeting is a way in which the Bishop's office can assist all Parish Priests and Parish Deacon. It is a time to listen to God's people articulate their hopes and dreams, joy and sorrows for the parish. It will provide a good basis for understanding what is needed in our parish and will also assist in developing our Ongoing Formation Plan.

Lunch will be provided. If you are thinking of going to the meeting, please put your name on the clipboard near the Holy goods store for catering.

Choir Practice for Easter

Tuesday 17 March, 24 March, 31 March and 7 April at 7.00 pm in St Michael's Church

New members very welcome

All ages, no auditions, no experience necessary, just turn up. If you enjoy singing and making music then THIS IS FOR YOU!



Project Compassion 2020

What is one thing you could give up for 40 days to make the world a better place?

Lenten Reflection Program 2020

Tuesdays at 3pm at 57 Gordon Close, Anna Bay
Wednesdays at 7.00pm in the Church Meeting Room
Sundays at 2.00pm in the Church Meeting Room

Church Rosters: There is a sheet near the Holy Goods Store for any amendments required to the existing Church Rosters. Please complete the form and we will arrange for the amendments in due course.

2020 Catechists Mass: Celebrate the wonderful work of catechists on Saturday, 21st March at 2pm, at the Sacred Heart Cathedral. We will be praying for our ministries in 2020 and will be acknowledging two of our Parishioners Renee Lyons 5 years' service to Sacrament of Initiation and Heather Sertori 20 years' service SRE and others long-standing catechists with awards for their many years of dedication and service.

Parish Name Badge: Would you like a St. Michael's Parish name badge? The current design has a white background with black writing/font. The cost of the badge is \$13. If you would like to order one please print your name clearly on an envelope and enclose \$13.00. You can bring your envelope to the Parish Office or return it via the collection plate at Mass.

Low Gluten Hosts are now available on the table with the offertory gifts in the back of the church. Parishioners wishing to receive a low gluten host are asked to place a low gluten host in the pyx marked low gluten before Mass. These hosts will be consecrated at Mass and available from the priest at Communion time.

Chrism Mass: Bishop William Wright, joined by the priests of the diocese, will gather at the Cathedral of Sacred Heart to celebrate the Chrism Mass. Saint Michael's Nelson Bay will provide bus transportation to and from the Cathedral for those wishing to attend. **The bus will depart Saint Michael's Church at 4.45pm on Tuesday 07 April.** Reserve your seats for the bus, PLEASE put your name and phone number on the clip board available near holy goods store.

Christian Meditation: Lent is a time when traditionally we renew our faith through greater spiritual discipline. This can take many shapes and forms. If you feel that you would like to explore Christian Meditation as a form of prayer, you would be very welcome to join one of the groups in the parish. There is no better way to learn than by doing! Christian Meditation is on every Friday at 10.30am in the Presbytery. Everyone is welcome to attend.

Planned Giving Envelope Numbers 25 and 205: Please contact the Parish Office as we do not know who these envelopes are allocated to.

Lenten Musings

When I begin Lent, I think of the Jordan River. It's where Jesus was baptised. It links the Dead Sea in the south with the Lake of Galilee in the north. Which way am I going to travel on the Jorday? Down to the Dead Sea or up to the Galilee?

Kevin O'Shea

This week's church roster reminders:

Readers: Sat V Valvason & K Locke
Sun T Burgin & H Ryan

Ministers of Communion:

Sat S Pasquale, M Stedman, P Bakaric, C Aquilina, K Davis

Sun C & G Hunt, A Young, MT & K Schiemer

Church Cleaning for March: Team 3

Altar Society for March: C Crowe & P Douglas

Next Week's Readings:

Fourth Sunday of Lent

First Reading: 1 Samuel 16:1,6-7,10-13

Second Reading: Ephesians 5:8-14

Gospel: John 9:1-41



Next week's readers:

Sat: W Jennings & M Stedman

Sun: Sr C Norman & J Eves

Reconciliation will be celebrated in our parish. It is each Saturday from 5.15pm to 5.45pm; and the **Second Rite will be on Thursday, 2nd April at 6.00pm**

Mass Times

Monday 16 March No Mass

Tuesday 17 March St. Patrick

4.30pm Rosary/Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament

5.00pm Mass

Wednesday 18 March

8.00 am Mass

Thursday 19 March St Joseph

10.00am Anointing Mass Uniting Salamander Bay Nursing Home 4 Muller Street.

4.30pm Rosary/Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament

5.00pm Mass

Friday 20 March

9.15 am Mass (School Mass Class 4B)

Saturday 21 March

5.15pm - 5.45pm Reconciliation

6.00pm Vigil Mass

Sunday 22 March

8.30 am Mass