

### **3<sup>RD</sup> SUNDAY OF LENT 2026**

Where can we look for the best things in life? Is there something extraordinary that can be attainable and could give us complete meaning for our lives? Will we find something that will explain everything and give us the fullness of life? Man's search for meaning has been continuous and unceasing. In spite of a great history of knowledge, epistemology (study of knowledge) and hermeneutics (study of interpretation), yet we are still making sense of this world. There is no ultimate truth a person has found. Even though for us Christians, Jesus is the ultimate truth, yet we still doubt, and we do not follow his teachings in word and deed. In this context, we have fantastic liturgical readings on this third Sunday in Lent to encourage us to strive to follow the same Lord who enlightened the Samaritan Woman two thousand years ago.

#### **1. God initiates dialogue with us**

The Gospel of the Third Sunday of Lent ([John 4:5-15, 19-26, 39-42](#)) presents the profound encounter between Jesus and the Samaritan woman at the well. It is a story of thirst—human thirst and divine thirst—meeting at the same place. Jesus begins the conversation with a simple request: “Give me a drink.” The Son of God appears tired, thirsty, and dependent on a stranger. In this moment, God reveals something essential about Himself: He approaches us in vulnerability.

Jesus does not begin by preaching or correcting; He begins by asking. God’s way of entering our lives is often quiet and gentle. At the well of our ordinary routines, in the middle of our daily struggles and fatigue, Christ waits and initiates a dialogue. Often, we are lost in simple things. Our worship must be rooted in authenticity, openness, and communion with God. Thus, it affects our whole life—our decisions, relationships, and attitudes.

#### **2. The process of transformation takes time**

The Samaritan woman comes to draw water, concerned with the ordinary needs of life. Yet Jesus gradually leads her from physical thirst to a deeper thirst of the soul. “Whoever drinks the water I give will never thirst.” Beneath all human desires—success, recognition, security, relationships, positions, power, authority—there is a deeper

longing: the longing for God. Many times, we try to satisfy this thirst with temporary sources that leave us empty again. Jesus reveals that only the living water of His presence can truly quench the restlessness of the human heart.

Jesus transforms the woman with a delicate and straightforward talk. She begins with hesitation and confusion, but slowly she becomes open and honest before Jesus. She allows herself to be known completely. In that encounter, she discovers dignity and truth. Instead of hiding her past, she stands before Christ as she is, and it becomes the moment of her liberation. Lent invites us into this same honesty before God. When we allow Christ to see the truth of our lives, His grace begins to transform us.

### **3. Meeting God in our honest confusions**

The Gospel invites us to reflect on our own wells—those places in our lives where Christ waits for us. Jesus meets us not when we are perfect, but precisely in our thirst, confusion, and searching. Lent is a time to sit with Him at the well, to listen, to speak honestly, and to allow Him to fill our hearts with the living water that alone can satisfy. Therefore, we can take a cue from St Paul. In his letter to the Romans (5:1–2, 5–8) St Paul speaks about the heart of Christian faith: justification through Christ, the gift of hope, and the overwhelming love of God poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who dwells within us.

Peace with God is not something we achieve by our own strength or moral perfection. It is a gift given through Christ. Often, we carry hidden burdens of guilt, fear, or the feeling that we are not good enough before God. Paul reminds us that reconciliation with God begins not with our effort but with God's grace. Through Christ, the distance between God and humanity has been bridged, and we are invited into a relationship of peace and trust. Hence, Lent is a time to rediscover our true self before God and accordingly allow ourselves transformed by His Spirit completely.

#### **Questions for self-reflection**

1. Am I willing to allow Jesus to enter into the ordinary situations of my daily life and speak to me there?

2. Are there areas of my life that I hesitate to bring honestly before God? What prevents me from being open with Him?
3. Have I experienced moments when Christ has touched my life deeply? How have those encounters changed my attitudes or priorities?

### **Prayer**

Lord Jesus, you met the Samaritan woman at the well and opened her heart to the living water of your grace. Come also to the wells of our daily lives. In our moments of thirst, restlessness, and searching, draw us into a deeper encounter with you. Remove the fears and barriers that prevent us from standing before you in truth. Fill our hearts with your living water so that our lives may become sources of hope and faith for others. We make this prayer in Jesus' Holy Name, Amen.

**- Fr Olvin Veigas, SJ**

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