

Church of the Divine Love
THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT
MARCH 12, 2023 10:15 A.M.
HOLY EUCHARIST, RITE II

Please observe silence

Alleluias are omitted during Lent

Prayer before worship – on insert

A PENITENTIAL ORDER

Processional Hymn #685 – **Rock of ages, cleft for me**

Opening Acclamation for Lent page 351

The Decalogue page 350

The Confession page 353

THE WORD OF GOD

Kyrie page 356

Collect of the Day - lectionary sheet insert

First Lesson: **Exodus 17:1-7**

Psalm 95

Second Lesson: **Romans 5:1-11**

Gradual Hymn #343 - **Shepherd of souls, refresh and bless**

Gospel: **John 4:5-42**

Sermon – The Rev. Jean Lenord Quatorze

Nicene Creed page 358

Prayers of the People, Form IV page 388

The Peace

Welcome and Announcements

THE HOLY COMMUNION

Offertory Hymn #686 – **Come, thou fount of every blessing**

Doxology (sung)

The Great Thanksgiving:

Eucharistic Prayer A page 361

Sanctus (S-130 in hymnal) page 362

Hymn during Consecration – on insert

The Lord's Prayer page 364

The Breaking of the Bread, Anthem & Prayer page 337

The Communion of the People

Communion Hymn #167 – **There is a green hill far away**

Post Communion Prayer page 365

Prayer for Peace – on insert

Prayer of St. Francis page 833

Dismissal Hymn #690 – **Guide me, O thou great Jehovah**

Dismissal

Sermon Sunday March 12, 2023

Exodus 17:1-7; Psalm 95; Romans 5:1-11; John 4:5-42

Dear people of God,

Our reading today from John's gospel recounts the well-known story of how Jesus met a woman at a well and how, through their encounter and conversation, he was able to change her life, transforming a damaging past into a promising future.

It's a moving and inspiring story but there something that's always puzzled me about John's account of this meeting. How did John know about it to include it when he wrote his gospel? After all, there were

only two people present during the interaction at the well – Jesus and the woman. There’s a little verse in brackets – verse 8 – which tells us that Jesus’ disciples had gone into the nearby town to buy food. So, they were clearly not there when Jesus had his conversation with this unfamiliar woman at the well. And indeed, if the disciples had been there, they may well have prevented Jesus from having any interaction at all with her given the social and religious conventions of the time and the circumstances of this particular woman. But thankfully they weren’t there, and Jesus was free to be radically generous with his time and his words, as he so often was.

So, let’s not be too quick to judge. We don’t know the details of her past. Maybe we don’t need to. Maybe it is enough that she mirrors for us our own lives. We too are people with a past, people with a history. We are all Samaritan women. People like her, people like us, people with a past, often live in fear of being found out. It is not just the fear that another will know the truth, the facts, about us but that they will do so without ever really seeing us and without ever really knowing us. We all thirst to be seen and to be known at a deep intimate level. We all want to pour our lives out to one who knows us, to let them drink from the depths of our very being. That is exactly what Jesus is asking of this woman with a past when he says, “Give me a drink.” It is the invitation to let herself be known. To be known is to be loved and to be loved is to be known.

To be found out, however, without being known leaves us dry and desolate. It leaves us to live a dehydrated life thirsting for something more, something different, but always returning to the same old wells. We all go down to some well. For some, like the Samaritan woman, it is the marriage well. For others it is the well of perfectionism. Some go to the well of hiding and isolation. Others will draw from the well of power and control. Too many will drink from the wells of addiction. Many live at the well of busyness and denial. We could each name the wells from which we drink. Day after day, month after month, year after year we go to the same well to drink. We arrive hoping our thirst will be quenched. We leave as thirsty as when we arrived only to return the next day. For too long we have drunk from the well that never satisfies, the well that can never satisfy. Husband after husband this is the well to which the Samaritan woman has returned.

There is another well, however. It is the well of Jesus Christ. It is the well that washes us clean of our past. This is the well from which new life and new possibilities spring forth. It is the well that frees us from the patterns and habits that keep us living as thirsty people. That is the well the Samaritan women in today’s gospel found. She intended to go to the same old well she had gone to for years, the well that her ancestors and their flocks drank from. Today is different. Jesus holds before her two realities of her life; the reality of what is and the reality of what might be. He brings her past to the light of the noon day. “You have had five husbands,” he says, “and the one you have now is not your husband.” It is not a statement of condemnation but simply a statement of what is. He tells her everything she has ever done. She has been found out.

But it doesn’t end there. Jesus is more interested in her future than her past. He wants to satisfy her thirst more than judge her history. Jesus knows her. He looks beyond her past and sees a woman dying

of thirst; a woman thirsting to be loved, to be seen, to be accepted, to be included, to be forgiven, to be known. Her thirst will never be quenched by the external wells of life. Nor will ours. Jesus says so. "Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, but those who drink of the water that I will give them will never be thirsty." This is the living water of new life, new possibilities, and freedom from the past. This living water is Jesus' own life. It became in the Samaritan woman "a spring of water gushing up to eternal life." She discovered within herself the interior well and left her water jar behind. She had now become the well in which Christ's life flows.

The woman's reaction to Jesus' unexpected challenge about her lifestyle is understandable – she seeks to change the subject. And, as is often the case today, the best subject for distracting attention from morality is to talk about religion instead! So, the woman launches into a debate about where the right place for worship is. But God's offer of a new kind of human life for all who give up the stagnant water and come to him for the living variety is absolute, and it can't be avoided by questions about which is the true holy mountain or which church is the right one. Jesus' response to the woman suggests that from now on holy mountains don't really matter very much. Holy mountains and holy buildings are at best signposts to God. However magnificent a holy mountain, however beautiful a village church, if they become an end in themselves and fail to point people to God then they become idols diverting us away from God. The woman makes one last attempt to counter this intriguing man at the well and to put a lid on their conversation, not realizing that this will leave Jesus with the final, definitive word. 'Well,' she says 'one day the Messiah will come and he will make all things clear. Why don't we wait till then?' Jesus is quick to take advantage of this opening and he simply responds 'Well, that's me.' Jesus is the final, definitive Word.

And Jesus continues to say that in our own age today. Whenever people come round to the key questions, and say 'If only someone would come and sort it all out!', then there Jesus is. 'That's me.' Waiting to do what he does best.

Let us pray: Gracious God, help us to be faithful witnesses to your transforming love. Help us to be bearers of hope. Help us to drink of the living water, the water that always quenches our thirst. May our spirits be filled with a spring of water gushing up to eternal life. Heavenly Father, thank you for what we can learn from this account of Jesus' conversation with the Samaritan woman at the well. Help us to continue to use this Lenten season to empty out the stagnant waters of our lives and to continually seek your face that we may be filled afresh each day with the living water of your Spirit. **Amen.**

Easter flower memorial envelopes are at the back of the church.

Please clearly print the names of your loved ones you wish to memorialize and return by Sunday, April 2nd. Make checks payable to The Church of the Divine Love Altar Guild.

3 LENT	10:15 AM	HOLY EUCHARIST, RITE II	(also on zoom)
		COFFEE HOUR FOLLOWS	
MONDAY	8:30 PM	AA MEETING	
WEDNESDAY	7:00 PM	AL-ANON MEETING	
THURSDAY	10AM-2PM	THRIFT SHOP	
	8:30 PM	AA MEETING	
SATURDAY	10AM-2PM	THRIFT SHOP	
4 LENT	10:15 AM	HOLY EUCHARIST, RITE II	(also on zoom)
		COFFEE HOUR FOLLOWS	

SUPPORT THE FOOD PANTRY – DROP OFF IN THE KITCHEN

	Today	Next Week
Eucharistic Minister	Jess Berbeck	Anthony Giordano
Coffee Hour	Janet Croft	Giordanos

PARISH PRAYER LIST

Give to all who suffer the refreshing waters of your compassion and healing. Make them dwell in the safety of your care even in the midst of all that troubles them. Especially we remember before you:

Grace Schinella	Lourdes S.	Bob Curley
John Mulligan	Arlene Goodenough	Celeste
Chris Dickson	Kate Jones	Deb P.
Michael Echevarria	John Rocco	Gabriel
Barbara Stinson	Michael & Family	Warren
Charlotte H.	Bernie Walther	Anthony
Mo (Rachael)	Bill Conklin Sr.	Carolyn
Anthony Paribello	Barbara Curran	Del
Ciara	Robert Sweat	Aidan
Sally & Roger	Sophia	Carol K.
People of Haiti	Christopher & Family	Julia
Mary & Family	People of Ukraine	Tim
Nathan Treadwell	Vincent	Art
Margaret	Kaylee	Judy
Tor	Phil Ryder	

Help us speak words of encouragement and offer deeds of kindness to them.
Bring us with them, into the unending joy of your kingdom. Amen

The departed: Margret L.

Prayer before Worship

Almighty God, who pours out on all who desire it, the spirit of grace. Deliver us, when we draw near to you, from coldness of heart and wanderings of mind, that with steadfast thoughts and kindled affections we may worship you in spirit and in truth; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Hymn to be sung during the consecration:

Father I adore you,
Lay my life before you,
How I love you.

Repeat twice with second verse starting with Jesus
and third verse starting with Spirit

Prayer for Peace

Eternal God, in whose perfect kingdom no sword is drawn but the sword of righteousness, no strength known but the strength of love: So mightily spread abroad your Spirit, that all peoples may be gathered under the banner of the Prince of Peace, as children of one Father; to whom be dominions and glory, now and for ever. Amen

