



3rd SUNDAY OF LENT

MARCH 8, 2026



Living **WATER**

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Mission Statement

“Good Shepherd Parish, under the guidance of the true Shepherd Jesus Christ, is a Catholic faith based community seeking to proclaim and live the gospel message. Recognizing our diversity, we strive to bring together a church family, welcoming all people as we grow together in faith, hope and love.”

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SERVED BY

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FROM THE PASTOR’S DESK, THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT. MARCH 8, 2026.

Today’s gospel reading presents us of a woman who encountered Jesus at Jacob’s well while drawing water for her household. Their mutual thirst brings them together. They both need water. Jesus’ thirst is physical. After walking in the heat of the day and at a considerable distance his body is hot, tired, and thirsty. The woman, too, thirsts. She longs to have the burdensome work of hauling water completed for another day.

*Most of the scandal of this weekend’s Gospel is largely lost on us and our culture today: but at the time of Jesus, given the strict rules of public decorum regarding encounters between men and women not of the same family, this chance meeting should have been over before it began. Women and men that were not related did **not** talk or have **any** association with one another in public. Add to this: that Jews and Samaritans had been the most bitter of enemies for centuries. Their hatred for one another and hostility toward the other knew few, if any, equals.*

It is midday at the well of Jacob and Jesus is resting there. The woman comes along at an hour when the sun burns hottest – doubtless to avoid meeting anyone, because she was sensitive about her ill-repute. She sees someone sitting there but she takes little notice because he is a Jew, and Jews disdain Samaritans, and vice versa, since they fell out with each other centuries earlier over idol worship and defilement. A not altogether friendly question and answer session follows on Jesus’ request for a drink, with the Samaritan woman not understanding the deeper meaning of Jesus’ words “anyone who drinks the water I shall give will never be thirsty again.” Her reply is merely that he needs a bucket! But what is this ‘living water’? It is not eternal life itself but something that leads to it, namely the teaching of Jesus. The OT often used the symbolism of water for God’s wisdom; ‘the teaching of the wise is a life-giving fountain’ (Prov 13:14). But the Samaritan woman was not understanding.

She then twists the repartee in the direction of places of worship, Jerusalem or Mt Gezerim, where her break-away Jewish movement worships. We see that she is beginning to think spiritually although she misses out on the fullness of what Jesus is really saying – that he himself replaces religious institutions like the Temple. For Jesus real worship does not involve ritual purity or attending at one or other temple; our way to God is through him. The conversation moves on two different plains: one material and practical whilst Jesus’ questioning and replying is always at a deeper, metaphysical, level.

But yet, the two sit, talk, and listen to one another. Through their mutual acceptance of the other, the walls, boundaries, hostilities, and hatreds, which had long separated Samaritans and Jews, melt away and disappear. The Samaritan woman comes to understand who Jesus is. Initially, he is simply a Jew, the despised and hated “other.” As he candidly speaks of her marital history, however, she comes to believe that he is a prophet

The people in the desert, in the first reading, were terrorized by the possibility of having no physical water, of thirsting to death. So too is our need for meaning in our lives, and for love, so as to persevere without losing direction and drive. Christ is the rock gushing forth in such life-giving water. Faith in him shows us the way to God who alone guarantees us the possibility of a great life, of fullness of life!

Good Shepherd Parish Schedule for Mass & Worship (schedules are subject to change)

Saturday (anticipated) 5:30pm
Holy Day TBD.

Sundays —9:00am, 11:00am
Reconciliation: Saturdays 4:45-5:15pm

National Holidays —9:00am
Adoration Mo-Fri 7:30am-5:00pm

THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT PAPAL ANGELUS-THE SAMARITAN WOMAN.

This Sunday, the Gospel presents us one of the most beautiful and fascinating encounters Jesus has – the one with the Samaritan woman (cf. *Jn* 4:5-42). Jesus and his disciples take a break near a well in Samaria. A woman arrives and Jesus says to her, “**Give me a drink**” (v. 8). I would like to pause specifically on this expression: *Give me a drink*.

This scene depicts Jesus, thirsty and tired. A Samaritan woman finds him at the hottest hour, at midday, asking for refreshment like a beggar. It is an image of God’s abasement. God lowers himself in Jesus Christ for our redemption. He comes to us. In Jesus, God made himself one of us, he lowered himself. Thirsty like us, he suffers our same thirst. Thinking about this scene, each one of us can say: the Lord, the Teacher, “asks me for a drink. So, he is thirsty like me. He shares my thirst. You are truly near me, Lord! You are in touch with my poverty.” But I can’t believe it! “*You have grasped me from below, from the lowest part of myself, where no one reaches me*” (P. Mazzolari, *La Samaritana*, Bologna 2022, 55-56). And you have come to me from below and you have grasped me from below because you were thirsting and thirst for me. In fact, **Jesus’ thirst is not only physical. It expresses the deepest thirsts of our lives, and above all, a thirst for our love. He is more than a beggar. He “is thirsty” for our love. And this will emerge at the culminating moment of his passion, on the cross, where, before dying, Jesus will say: “I thirst” (*Jn* 19:28). That thirst for love brought him to descend, to lower himself, to abase himself, to be one of us.**

But the Lord who asks for a drink is the One who gives to drink. Meeting the Samaritan woman, **he speaks to her about the Holy Spirit’s living water. And from the cross, blood and water flow from his pierced side (cf. *Jn* 19:34). Thirsty for love, Jesus quenches our thirst with love.** And he does with us what he did with the Samaritan woman – he comes to meet us in our daily life, he shares our thirst, he promises us living water that makes eternal life well up within us.

Give me a drink. There is a second aspect. These words are not only a request from Jesus to the Samaritan woman, but a cry – silent at times – that meets us every day and asks us to slake someone else’s thirst, to take care of someone else’s thirst. **How many say ‘give me a drink’ to us – in our family, at work, in other places we find ourselves. They thirst for closeness, for attention, for a listening ear.** People say it who thirst for the Word of God and need to find an oasis in the Church where they can drink. ***Give me a drink* is a cry heard in our society, where the frenetic pace, the rush to consume, and especially indifference, that culture of indifference, generate aridity and interior emptiness.** And – let us not forget this – ‘*give me a drink*’ is the cry of many brothers and sisters who lack the water to live, while our common home continues to be polluted and defaced. Exhausted and parched, she too “is thirsty”.

Before these challenges, **today’s Gospel offers living water to every one of us who can become a refreshing spring for others.** And so, like the Samaritan woman who leaves her jug at the well and went to call the people of her village (cf. v. 28), we too will no longer only think of slaking our own thirst, our material thirst, our intellectual or cultural thirst, but with the joy of having met the Lord, we will quench others’ thirst, giving meaning to someone else’s life, not as masters, but as servants of that Word of God who has thirsted for us, who continually thirsts for us. We will understand their thirst and share the love he has given to us. A question to ask myself and all of you is coming to: Are we able to understand the thirst of others, the thirst people have, the thirst so many in my family, in my neighborhood have?

Today, we can ask ourselves: **Do I thirst for God? Am I aware that I need his love like water to live? And then: I who am thirsty, am I concerned about the thirst of others, their spiritual thirst, their material thirst?**

May Our Lady intercede for us and sustain us on the way.

By Pp Francis.