

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON (or a hymn) My eyes are always on the Lord, for he rescues my feet from the snare. Turn to me and have mercy on me, for I am alone and poor.

(Or) When I prove my holiness among you, I will gather you from all the foreign lands; and I will pour clean water upon you and cleanse you from all your impurities, and I will give you a new spirit, says the Lord.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM (Ps 94)

ANTIPHON: If today you hear his voice, harden not your hearts.

RESPONSE: If today you hear his voice, harden not your hearts.

LECTOR: 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.**

LECTOR: 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.**

LECTOR: 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.**

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION 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!

COMMUNION ANTIPHON (or a hymn) For anyone who drinks it, says the Lord, the water I shall give will become in him a spring welling up to eternal life.

(Or) The sparrow finds a home, and the swallow a nest for her young: by your altars, O Lord of hosts, my King and my God. Blessed are they who dwell in your house, for ever singing your praise.

TODAY'S READINGS Exodus 17:3-7; Romans 5:1-2, 5-8; John 4:5-42

NEXT WEEK (4th Sunday of Lent, Year A) 1 Samuel 16:1, 6-7, 10-13; Psalm 22; Ephesians 5:8-14; John 9:1-41

*Galong
Gathering
March 15*

Gather family and friends, pack a picnic lunch and come to Galong, NSW for a day of faith and fun to celebrate the tercentenary of the birth (300) of the Redemptorist Brother, and 'Champion of the Family', St Gerard Majella. St Gerard is invoked as a patron of mothers, especially in times of pregnancy. An outdoor Mass will be held in the grounds of the Monastery at 10.30 am led by Fr John Hodgson, CSSR – the Provincial Superior of the Redemptorist Congregation of Oceania. A picnic lunch and other activities will follow Mass. More details St Clement's Retreat & Conference Centre on

02 6380 5222.

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*Jesus shows
us the way to
care*



8 March 2026 3rd Sunday Lent Year A

Breaking boundaries is not always a good thing! In fact, we do well, for the most part, to stay within the boundaries set by family, community, workplace, church and state. However, if we are to grow in our calling to be missionary disciples of Jesus, we need to realise that Jesus himself was not afraid to question prejudices and break boundaries when the mission requires it.

This is precisely what happens in this week's story of Jesus meeting the Samaritan woman at the well. First of all, as a rabbi or teacher, he was not supposed to enter into dialogue with a woman, certainly not on a one-to-one basis. Second, as a Jew, he was supposed to despise Samaritan people – in much the same ways as many Jews in the State of Israel despise Palestinian people today.

However, Jesus pays scant regard to such cultural and religious taboos by asking the Samaritan woman for water. We might say her reaction shows she was totally freaked out: "What, you a Jew, ask me a Samaritan for a drink?" She then becomes almost hostile and even sarcastic when Jesus suggests he could give her "living water": "You have no bucket sir ... are you greater than our father Jacob?"

Jesus again speaks of the water he is offering as quenching people's thirst forever. Here Jesus breaks through the woman's defences. Jesus then demonstrates he is fully aware of the woman's irregular marriage situation – having had five husbands and now living with someone else! Yet, Jesus is not fazed by this, nor dismissive of the woman and her life-experiences.

To the contrary, Jesus draws the woman to pronounce him as a prophet as well as acknowledging something of her own faith in the God of Israel and the promised Messiah. Here is the only place in the ministry of Jesus where he identifies himself as the Messiah: "I who am speaking to you, I am he!"

The woman's response is immediate. She takes off to inform the other people of the village she has met Christ the Messiah. Many came to believe, not just because of the strength of her testimony, but on account of their own experience of Jesus as "Saviour of the World".

What we need to learn from this gospel story is that we are not called to be missionary disciples of Jesus on account of our own gifts or talents. The Samaritan woman was no paragon of virtue, yet Jesus, who knew everything about her, loved her and commissioned her to bring good news to others.

There is something else we can learn from the Samaritan woman, namely her honesty and straight-forward way of speaking. She does not pretend to be somebody other than who she is; yet, she is open to change her viewpoint and behaviour. She is also prepared to break boundaries by entering into dialogue with Jesus. Like the Samaritan woman, let us dialogue with Jesus and take his message of divine love and forgiveness to others.

Gerard Hall SM

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