

RCIA First Scrutiny on the Third Sunday of Lent

5pm Vigil Mass 2 March 2024

Liturgy of the Word

First Reading

Responsorial Psalm

Second Reading

Gospel Reading John 4:5-42

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:

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.' 'Go and call your husband' said Jesus to her 'and come back here.' The woman answered, 'I have no husband.' He said to her, 'You are right to say, "I have no husband"; for although you have had five, the one you have now is not your husband. You spoke the truth there.' '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 do 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.' At this point his disciples returned, and were surprised to find him speaking to a woman, though none of them asked, 'What do you want from her?' or, 'Why are you talking to her?' The woman put down her water jar and hurried back to the town to tell the people, 'Come and see a man who has told me everything I ever did; I wonder if he is the Christ?' This brought people out of the town and they started walking towards him.

Meanwhile, the disciples were urging him, 'Rabbi, do have something to eat'; but he said, 'I have food to eat that you do not know about.' So the disciples asked one another, 'Has someone been bringing him food?' But Jesus said:

'My food
is to do the will of the one who sent me,
and to complete his work.
Have you not got a saying:
Four months and then the harvest?
Well, I tell you:
Look around you, look at the fields;
already they are white, ready for harvest!
Already the reaper is being paid his wages,
already he is bringing in the grain for eternal life,
and thus sower and reaper rejoice together.
For here the proverb holds good:
one sows, another reaps;
I sent you to reap
a harvest you had not worked for.
Others worked for it;
and you have come into the rewards of their trouble.'

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.'

Homily

Scrutiny

Leader: Two weeks ago, **Bishop** formally accepted our Catechumens at the Rite of Election at St Mary's Cathedral. I now ask our Elect, who will be receiving the Sacraments of Initiation at Easter to please come forward and receive a copy of the Creed:

Each Elect comes forward, bows, receives the Creed from the priest and stands in front of the Altar facing the congregation

Bryan Ngai Yan KWOK

Elizabeth YAN

Jingjing WEI

Lili Lillian LI

Yin YE

Zhengxue Li LIU

Anita LAM

WingYu WONG

Zhaoxian GONG

Yong CHEN

Priest: I ask all of you assembled here to pray in silence that these Elect of God be given a spirit of repentance, a sense of sin and true freedom of the Children of God.
And I ask you, Elect of God, as a sign of your inner spirit of repentance to bow your heads in prayer.

Silence for a few minutes

Creed

Prayer of the Faithful

Priest: Let us pray for these Elect whom the Church has confidently chosen. May they successfully complete their long preparation and at the Paschal Feast find Christ in his Sacraments.

Leader: We pray that our Elect may ponder the Word of God in their hearts and savour its meaning more fully day by day. Lord hear us.

Leader: We pray that they may learn to know Christ who came to save what was lost. Lord hear us.

Leader: We pray that they may humbly confess themselves to be sinners. Lord hear us.

Leader: We pray that they may sincerely reject everything in their lives that is displeasing and contrary to Christ. Lord hear us.

Leader: We pray that the Holy Spirit who searches every heart, may help them overcome their weakness through his power. Lord hear us.

Leader: We pray that the same Holy Spirit may teach them to know the things of God and how to please Him. Lord hear us.

Leader: We pray that their families also may put their hope in Christ and find peace and holiness in Him. Lord hear us.

Leader: That we ourselves in preparation for the Easter feast may seek a change of heart, give ourselves to prayer and persevere in our good works. Lord hear us.

Leader: That throughout the whole world whatever is weak may be strengthened, whatever is broken restored, whatever is lost found, and what is found redeemed, let us pray to the Lord. Lord hear us.

Leader: We pray for our Holy Father Pope Francis, our bishop Anthony, all bishops, priests and religious. Lord hear us.

Leader: Grant patience, healing and comfort to those who are sick and suffering. Lord hear us.

Leader: Grant eternal rest to our recently departed relatives and friends. Lord hear us.

Priest: Most merciful Father, this season of Lent is a time of grace; favour us with your kindness and mercy as we come before you in prayer. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen

Exorcism

Priest invites the Elect to face the Altar

Priest: God of power, you sent your Son to be our Saviour. Grant that these Elect who, like the woman of Samaria, thirst for living water, may turn to the Lord as they hear his word and acknowledge the sins and weaknesses that weigh them down. Protect them from vain reliance on self and defend them from the power of Satan. Free them from the spirit deceit so that, admitting the wrong they have done, they may attain purity of heart and advance on the way on salvation. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

People: Amen.

Priest stretches his hands out to the Elect

Priest: Lord Jesus, in your merciful wisdom you touched the heart of the sinful woman and taught her to worship the Father in spirit and truth. Now by your power, free these Elect from the cunning of Satan as they draw near to the fountain of living water. Touch their hearts with the power of the Holy Spirit that they may come to know the Father in true faith, which expresses itself in love, for you live and reign for ever and ever.

People: Amen.

Dismissal of the Elect

Priest: Although you cannot yet participate fully in the Lord's Eucharist, stay with us as a sign of our hope that all God's children will eat and drink with the Lord and work with his Spirit to recreate the face of the earth. Please return to your seats.