

Sunday Readings

8th March 2026

FIRST READING

A reading from the Book of Exodus

17:3-7

In those days: The people thirsted for water, and the people grumbled against Moses and said, 'Why did you bring us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and our livestock with thirst?' So Moses cried to the LORD, 'What shall I do with this people? They are almost ready to stone me.' And the LORD said to Moses, 'Pass on before the people, taking with you some of the elders of Israel, and take in your hand the staff with which you struck the Nile, and go. Behold, I will stand before you there on the rock at Horeb, and you shall strike the rock, and water shall come out of it, and the people will drink.' And Moses did so, in the sight of the elders of Israel. And he called the name of the place Massah and Meribah, because of the quarrelling of the people of Israel, and because they tested the LORD by saying, 'Is the LORD among us or not?'

The word of the Lord. *Thanks be to God.*

Responsorial Psalm Psalm 94:1-2,6-9. R/. v.8

**R/. O that today you would listen to his voice!
'Harden not your hearts.'**

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/.**

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/.**

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/.**

SECOND READING

A reading from the letter of St Paul
to the Romans

5:1-2,5-8

Brothers and Sisters: Since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God, and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.

For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. For one will scarcely die for a righteous person — though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die — but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

The word of the Lord. *Thanks be to God.*

GOSPEL

John 4:5-16,19-26,39-42

The Lord be with you. *And with your Spirit.*
A reading from the holy Gospel according to John.
Glory to you, O Lord.

At that time: Jesus came to a town of Samaria called Sychar, near the field that Jacob had given to his son Joseph. Jacob's well was there; so Jesus, wearied as he was from his journey, was sitting beside the well. It was about the sixth hour.

A woman from Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, 'Give me a drink.' (For his disciples had gone away into the city to buy food.) The Samaritan woman said to him, 'How is it that you, a Jew, ask for a drink from me, a woman of Samaria?' (For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.) Jesus answered her, 'If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, "Give me a drink", you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water.' The woman said to him, 'Sir, you have nothing to draw water with, and the well is deep. Where do you get that living water? Are you greater than our father Jacob? He gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did his sons and his livestock.' Jesus said to her, 'Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again. The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.' The woman said to him, 'Sir, give me this water, so that I will not be thirsty or have to come here to draw water.'

Jesus said to her, 'Go, call your husband, and come here.' The woman answered him, 'I have no husband.' Jesus said to her, 'You are right in saying, "I have no husband"; for you have had five husbands, and the one you now have is not your husband. What you have said is true.' The woman said to him, 'Sir, I perceive that you are a prophet. Our fathers worshipped on this mountain, but you say that in Jerusalem is the place where people ought to worship.' Jesus said to her, 'Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father. You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him. God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.' The woman said to him, 'I know that Messiah is coming — he who is called Christ. When he comes, he will tell us all things.' Jesus said to her, 'I who speak to you am he.'

Just then his disciples came back. They marvelled that he was talking with a woman, but no one said, 'What do you seek?' or, 'Why are you talking with her?' So the woman left her water jar and went away into town and said to the people, 'Come, see a man who told me all that I ever did. Can this be the Christ?' They went out of the town and were coming to him.

Meanwhile the disciples were urging him, saying, 'Rabbi, eat.' But he said to them, 'I have food to eat that you do not know about.' So the disciples said to one another, 'Has anyone brought him something to eat?' Jesus said to them, 'My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to accomplish his work. Do you not say, "There are yet four months, then comes the harvest"? Look, I tell you, lift up your eyes, and see that the fields are white for harvest. Already the one who reaps is receiving wages and gathering fruit for eternal life, so that sower and reaper may rejoice together. For here the saying holds true, "One sows and another reaps." I sent you to reap that for which you did not labour. Others have laboured, and you have entered into their labour.'

Many Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman's testimony, 'He told me all that I ever did.' So when the Samaritans came to him, they asked him to stay with them, and he stayed there two days. And many more believed because of his word. They said to the woman, 'It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is indeed the Saviour of the world.'

Third Sunday of Lent

Lectionary Year A

The Word of God

Saint of the Week

We ask so much of God! So often our prayers are about what we need, what we want, what others need and what others want. We are humans and most often focused only on our own world. Today Jesus invites us to open our eyes and see the salvation of God all around us. If we see salvation, we might prepare our hearts to walk with Jesus through death to resurrection.

The first reading today is from the Book of Exodus. The Jewish people have begun their walk to the Promised Land. Now they feel the lack of water and begin to complain. Now it is water they lack, later it is food. Still later they want a different leader. The complaint does not matter! Always it is something! But water is important and we find this longing for water here in the first reading and then much more so in the Gospel from Saint John.

The second reading brings in another element: God proves his love for us in that while we were still sinners Christ died for us. The Letter to the Romans from which today's small passage comes, reflects on the deep love of God for His people. God loves us so much that He sends His own Son—even to die for us while we are still sinners. For so many people today, such a sacrifice appears useless or even at times something that should be taken for granted. We live in a society where we expect to be the centre and to be taken care of. How can we convey the immense value of Jesus giving His life for us?

Jesus shows us a way in the Gospel of John today. He is gentle and courteous and draws the interest of the Samaritan woman in many ways. First Jesus asks her for water. Then later Jesus offers her water. Slowly she comes to understand that this man there with her might be the Messiah. This is one of the very few places in all of Scripture where Jesus says completely directly: "I am he, the one speaking with you."

Each of us, right now, must become aware that this is Jesus speaking not only directly to the Samaritan woman, but to each one of us. Jesus tells each one of us: "I am the Messiah, the one who is speaking to you." So many of us look and look for the Messiah! In so many ways we look for ways of salvation. Yet, when the Messiah is right there with us and tells us: "I am the Messiah," we seem to ignore Him. We want something or someone else.

Jesus, let me know You! May I come to know you as the fulfilling of all that I have ever wanted! Let me see Your face and I shall be saved.

Monday 9 March 2026

**St Frances of Rome
(1384 - 1440)**



She was born in Rome in 1384 and was married at the age of 13. Although she had wanted to be a nun, she was happily married for 40 years and had three sons. She distributed gifts to the poor and ministered to the sick. She was remarkable for her humility and detachment, her obedience and patience in adversity (including her husband's banishment, the

death of two of her sons from plague, and the loss of all her property).

She was a mystic and contemplative, part of the great flourishing of mysticism in that period, and after her husband's death she retired to a convent she had founded, where she died on 9 March 1440.

Prayer of the Week

God, heavenly Father,
look upon me and hear my prayer
during this holy Season of Lent.
By the good works You inspire,
help me to be renewed in spirit.

Lord, during this Lenten Season,
nourish me with Your Word of life
and make me one
with You in love and prayer.
Fill my heart with Your love
and keep me faithful to the Gospel of
Christ.
Give me new life by Your Sacraments.

Father, our source of life,
I reach out with joy to grasp Your
hand;
let me walk more readily in Your ways.
Guide me in Your gentle mercy,
for left to myself I cannot do Your Will.
I ask this through
our Lord Jesus Christ, Your Son,
Who lives and reigns with You
and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever.

Amen.

