

# food for thought

*Jesus reveals himself to the Samaritan woman at the well.*



On this Sunday and the next two Sundays, we break from reading the Gospel of Matthew to read from John's Gospel. The Gospel of John is the only Gospel not assigned to a particular liturgical year. Instead, readings from John's Gospel are interspersed throughout our three-year liturgical cycle.

In today's Gospel, the dialogue between Jesus and a woman from Samaria is among the most lengthy and most theological found in Scripture. The most startling aspect of the conversation is that it happens at all. Jesus, an observant Jew of that time, was expected to avoid conversation with women in public. The animosity between the Jews and the Samaritans should have prevented the conversation as well. The woman herself alludes to the break from tradition: "How can you, a Jew, ask me, a Samaritan woman, for a drink?" Yet Jesus not only converses with the woman, he also asks to share her drinking vessel, an action that makes him unclean according to Jewish law.

The initial conversation between Jesus and the woman is better understood if we consider the importance of water, especially in the climate of Israel. At first, the woman understands Jesus' promise of "living water" in a literal sense: "Sir, give me this water, so that I may not be thirsty or have to keep coming

here to draw water." With no running water, the daily trip to the well by the women of the community was of paramount importance. The women of the town would have traveled to the well in the early morning, but this woman came to the well at noon, the hottest time of the day. The timing of her visit is a clear sign that she is an outcast within the Samaritan community. We learn in her conversation with Jesus that she is an outcast because of her "many husbands."

Behind the conversation lies the animosity and rivalry between the Jews and the Samaritans. Samaritans shared Jewish ancestry, but Samaritans had intermarried with foreigners when they lived under the rule of the Assyrians. Samaritan religion included worship of Yahweh, but was also influenced by the worship of other gods. When the Jews refused Samaritan help in the building of the Temple at Jerusalem, the Samaritans eventually built a temple for themselves at Mt. Gerizim (the same mountain mentioned by the woman at the well). Like the Jews, the Samaritans believed that a Messiah would come.

The high point of the conversation is when Jesus reveals himself to her as the Messiah. His answer to the Samaritan woman's questions about worship is meant to predict a time when worshipping in truth and spirit will become the way to worship.

After the conversation, the Samaritan woman becomes a disciple. Even though she is an outcast and not a Jew, she returns to her town to lead others to Jesus and to wonder whether she has found the Messiah. The Samaritan townspeople return with her to meet Jesus for themselves, and many are said to come to believe in him.

The significance of the encounter between Jesus and the Samaritan woman has many levels. The first is personal: The woman is herself converted to belief in Jesus as Messiah because he knows her sin but speaks with her just the same. The second is social: Having come to know Jesus as the Messiah, the Samaritan woman becomes an evangelist to her own people.

The third level of the story is educational: Jesus uses his encounter with the Samaritan woman to teach his disciples that God's mercy is without limit. The disciples return from their shopping quite confused to find Jesus talking with a Samaritan, and a woman at that! But the conversion of the Samaritan townspeople is a foretaste of the kind of open community that will be created among those who believe that Jesus is the Messiah.



*The Water I shall Give  
Will Become A Spring  
Of Living Water  
Welling Up To  
Eternal Life*

## Church of Our Lady of Lourdes

50 Ophir Road, Singapore 188690 Tel: 6294 0624  
www.lourdes.sg

Parish Priest: Rev Fr Michael Sitaram  
Email: frmichaelsitaram@gmail.com

Asst. Parish Priest: Rev Fr Paul Yeo  
Email: fryeopaul@gmail.com

Asst. Parish Priest: Rev Fr Nithiya Sagayaraj  
Email: nithiya@catholic.org.sg

Parish Secretariat: ololsec@gmail.com  
and ololpastoral@gmail.com

15 MAR 2020

3RD SUNDAY OF LENT

YEAR A





### Sunday Readings

First reading  
Exodus 17:3-7  
Responsorial Psalm  
Psalm 94:1-2,6-9  
Second reading  
Romans 5:1-2,5-8  
Gospel  
John 4:5-42

### Mass Schedule @ Church of Our Lady of Lourdes

Weekdays (English) 12:30pm and 6:30pm  
Saturday (Sunset - English) 6:00pm and 7:30pm  
Sunday (English) 7:30am, 11:30am and 1.00pm  
Sunday (Tamil) 9:30am and 6:30pm  
Public Holiday 9:00am (English) 10:00am (Tamil)

### Parish Activities

**English**

- Our Lady of Lourdes Novena (Saturday) 5:15pm
- Rosary Recitation (Weekdays) 11.55am
- Monday and Wednesday 5.55pm (Sunday @ 10.55am)
- Holy Hour with Benediction (1st Friday) 7.00pm
- Sacred Heart Devotion (Friday) 7.00pm
- Divine Mercy (Tuesday) 5:45pm
- Legion of Mary (Tuesdays) 7.30pm
- Infant Jesus (Thursday) 5:45pm
- Charismatic (Friday) 7.45pm
- Divine Mercy (Saturday) 3.00pm
- Legion of Mary (Sundays) 9.45am

**Tamil**

- Infant Jesus (Tuesday) 4:30pm
- Divine Mercy (Friday) 5:45pm
- OLPS Novena (Every Saturday) 8:30pm
- Rosary and OLOL Devotion (Sunday) 8:30am
- All Night Vigil (2nd Saturday) 9.30pm to 5.30am

**Indonesian**

- Karismatik Katolik Indonesia Holy Spirit (Thursday) 2.30pm
- KKIHS Youth Group (Last Friday of the month) 7.30pm
- Mass in Indonesian (1st Sunday) 3.30pm

**Filipino**

- Light of Jesus Bible Sharing (Monday) 7.30pm

### Important Parish Information

**Wedding Arrangements** Church Wedding bookings must be made in advance. Please contact the Secretariat.

**Infant Baptism** Register at the Parish Office.  
**Please provide photocopy of church marriage certificate of parents, birth certificate of infant and confirmation certificate of Godparents.**

**Mass Intentions** Please drop your Mass intention into the Box located outside the Parish Office **by 7pm on Friday** for the following week's intentions.

**Lourdes Prayer Hall** For bookings contact the Parish Office at 6294 0624

**Anointing** Make an appointment with a priest before planned admission to hospital.

**Holy Communion for the Homebound** Register with the Parish Office.

*Kindly be aware of people who profess to pray over others in the Parish Grounds, and/or in your homes for the purpose of soliciting funds without the approval of the Archdiocese and Priests of the Parish.*

**The restoration of Our Lady of Lourdes parish will begin soon. Cheque donations can be made in favour of 'Church of Our Lady of Lourdes' with 'Building Fund' written on the back. Please give generously!**

### Church of Our Lady of Lourdes Online Masses

Please follow our Masses online at  
<https://www.facebook.com/ChurchOfOurLadyOfLourdes>  
or on the Church of Lourdes YouTube channel at <http://tiny.cc/ololsg>.  
Do remember to click **Subscribe** to receive notifications when we upload the videos.

Dear Parishioners of Church of Our Lady of Lourdes,

As you are aware, public masses in our Archdiocese have been temporarily suspended since 15 Feb 2020. Masses have been broadcast on Youtube and CatholicSG Radio.

As the parish will still need funds for the general operations and maintenance of the church, we seek your kind generosity and support to continue making a weekly donation to the Church by electronic bank transfer using PayNow at the current time.

Here is what you need to do:

- Step 1: Select bank transfer
- Step 2: Key in Parish UEN # T08CC4026C
- Step 3: Check Name – Church of Our Lady of Lourdes
- Step 4: Key in amount
- Step 5: Key in Ref - Mass Collection

Alternatively, you can issue a cheque and mail it to the Parish Office. If any parishioner chooses to give cash, please drop the cash in the existing donation box at the Parish.

Thank you once again for your generosity. God Bless.

Fr Michael Sitaram  
Parish Priest

### Lenten Reflection Booklets

The Office for the New Evangelisation has produced a booklet of reflections for the season of Lent, with the theme "Communion in Growth". Please take a copy of the booklet for your family. It is also available online [tinyurl.com/oneLent2020](http://tinyurl.com/one Lent2020).

### Divine Mercy @ Church of Our Lady of Lourdes

*"We resemble God most when we forgive our neighbours" (Diary, 1148)" Scripture is clear that as our Heavenly Father loves us, we are to love others."*

**Please be informed that there will be no 3pm DMD sessions on Saturdays until further notice.** Divine Mercy Devotions every Tuesday at 5:45pm and in Tamil on Fridays at 5.45pm will be as per normal.

### POPE'S PRAYER INTENTIONS – MARCH 2020

Evangelisation: Catholics in China – We pray that the Church in China may persevere in its faithfulness to the Gospel and grow in unity.

### CARITAS SINGAPORE – CHARITIES WEEK 2020

"The season of Lent is the time when the Caritas Singapore conducts its annual Archdiocesan fundraising campaign – Charities Week 2020. Your donation will provide much-needed funding to support the work of the Caritas Singapore family to journey with the vulnerable and marginalised in our community such as low-income families, youth-at-risk, the incarcerated, people with physical disabilities, and people with mental health issues. Please pick up an appeal envelope, and give generously. It will enable our Catholic charities to further their cause and do more to help our brothers and sisters in need."  
All Donations are eligible for 250% Tax Deduction