



Reflection by Greg Sunter

The encounter between Jesus and the Samaritan woman at the well is rich in historical and cultural nuance that enhances our understanding and interpretation of this passage. When he asks the woman for a drink, Jesus breaks two cultural taboos: firstly, for a man to speak directly to an unchaperoned woman was somewhat scandalous; secondly, as the woman points out, Jesus is a Jew and directly addresses a Samaritan – another scandal. Jesus successfully gains the woman's attention by ignoring these social taboos but she fails to fully understand his reference to 'living water'.

The reference to the woman's five husbands has often been construed to suggest that she was either a prostitute or a serial widow. However, it may in fact be a reference to the Samaritans binding themselves (wedding themselves) to the five books of the Torah and ignoring the writings of the prophets and other later writings. This reference is followed by another fact that set Jews and Samaritans apart: the Samaritans worshipped God on a local mountain, Mt Gerazim, whilst the Jews held that true worship could only take place in Jerusalem. Jesus dismisses this major difference between Jews and Samaritans by declaring that soon 'true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth'. He is indicating the much more personal relationship with God that he models; not bound up by ritual, place and law.

Having set the scene for breaking down the walls between Jews and Samaritans, Jesus then reveals to the woman unequivocally that he is the promised Messiah. The woman rushes back to the town to spread the good news about Jesus. She becomes a missionary for him; and a remarkably effective one. The people are convinced by her testimony and flock to Jesus where they have their own personal faith encounter with him.

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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. I see you are a prophet, sir. 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.'

Many Samaritans of that town had believed in him on the strength of the woman's testimony, 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.'

Third Sunday of Lent, Year A

First Reading Ex 17:3-7

Give us water to drink.

Tormented by thirst, the people complained against Moses. 'Why did you bring us out of Egypt?' they said. 'Was it so that I should die of thirst, my children too, and my cattle?' Moses appealed to the Lord. 'How am I to deal with this people?' he said. 'A little more and they will stone me!' The Lord said to Moses, 'Take with you some of the elders of Israel and move on to the forefront of the people; take in your hand the staff with which you struck the river, and go. I shall be standing before you there on the rock, at Horeb. You must strike the rock, and water will flow from it for the people to drink.' This is what Moses did, in the sight of the elders of Israel. The place was named Massah and Meribah because of the grumbling of the sons of Israel and because they put the Lord to the test by saying, 'Is the Lord with us, or not?'

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 94:1-2. 6-9. R. v.8

(R.) If today you hear his voice, harden not your hearts.

1. 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.)
2. 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.)
3. 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 Rom 5:1-2, 5-8

The love of God has been poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, which has been given to us.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ by faith we are judged righteous and at peace with God, since it is by faith

and through Jesus that we have entered this state of grace in which we can boast about looking forward to God's glory. This hope is not deceptive, because the love of God has been poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit which has been given us. We were still helpless when at his appointed moment Christ died for sinful men. It is not easy to die even for a good man – though of course for someone really worthy, a man might be prepared to die – but what proves that God loves us is that Christ died for us while we were still sinners.

Gospel Acclamation See Jn 4:42. 15

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!

Gospel shorter form

Jn 4:5-15, 19-26, 39-42

The water that I shall give will turn into a spring of eternal life.

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:

IN YOUR PRAYERS

SICK

Virgilio & Norma Salvador, Reynaldo Salvador, Jacundiano Berro, Estrelita Keller, Ramon Abelgas Sr.

RECENTLY DECEASED

Ian Howe

ANNIVERSARIES

Matthew Sesto, Aloysius Furtado, Antonio Catalano, Filippo & Fortunata Mirenda

RITE OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF ADULTS (RCIA)

Next meets on Tuesday 10th March 2026 at 7.00pm in the Parish Centre Meeting Room.

BAPTISMS AT ST PETER'S

12 noon – Sunday, 15th March 2026

Esmee Catherine Ogilvie
Elizabeth & Victoria Stanley

Please pray for these children and their families.

PARISH SUPPORT

Thank you all for your continued support. For those who prefer to, online donations can be made as follows:-

Presbytery Collection – 1st Collection

Account Name: St Peter's Presbytery A/C BSB: 083 347 Account No. 665417521 Reference as your first initial then surname, or you may remain anonymous

Church Collection – 2nd Collection

Account Name: St Peter's Church Account BSB: 083 347 A/C No. 535304676. Reference as your first initial then surname and if known, your giving number e.g. A-Smith T/G 500

PARISH THANKSGIVING PROGRAM

New Thanksgiving envelopes and receipts are available for collection in the narthex. **The new envelopes commence 15th March.** Please try to get up to date with your current envelopes, prior to starting the new envelopes. For those who give by credit card, direct debit, or directly online, please find your envelope with your receipt. Anyone not currently contributing to our Thanksgiving Program but would like to join, please complete a Census card, available in the narthex and return to the Parish Office.

PARISH NEWS

LENTEN PILGRIMAGE TO TA' PINU MARIAN SHRINE, BACCHUS MARSH – Saturday 14th March 2026

As part of our Lenten journey, we will have a Pilgrimage to Our Lady Ta' Pinu Marian Shrine, 15 Flanagan Drive, Merrimu on Saturday, 14th March. All invited to attend. We will hire a bus for the day – \$15 per adult, children 12 and under free. BYO lunch. Please see sign-up sheet in the narthex and include your contact details, or email the Parish Office. **RSVP by 8th March.**

8.45am Depart St Peter's Carpark

10.00am Stations of the Cross

12noon Holy Mass

1.00pm Light Lunch

2.30pm Bus departs Ta' Pinu

3.30pm Return St Peter's Carpark

PARISH LENTEN RETREAT

The Parish Lenten Retreat will be held on **Saturday, 21st March, 9:15 AM – 12:00 PM, preached by Fr. Mathew OFM Cap.** Join us for **Holy Mass, a Lenten reflection, confession, and Adoration with Benediction.** All are welcome to this time of prayer and spiritual renewal.

STATIONS OF THE CROSS & HOLY MASS

Throughout the season of Lent, the Stations of the Cross continue to be prayed every **Friday at 7:00pm, followed by Holy Mass.** All parishioners are warmly invited to take part in these Lenten devotions as we prepare our hearts for Easter.

PALMS If anyone has Palms for Palm Sunday (29th March), please bring them to the Church on Friday, 27th March, or contact the Parish Office if they need to be collected from your garden.

PROJECT COMPASSION 2026

Please support Project Compassion 2026 through the donation boxes, envelopes, by calling 1800 024 413 or online at: www.projectcompassion.org.au/donate.

Thank you for standing with us, as we

Unite Against Poverty this Lent.

CATHOLIC ARCHDIOCESE OF MELBOURNE: SYNOD 2026

On the third Sunday of Lent, Archbishop Peter A Comensoli will formally convoke a Synod for the Archdiocese of Melbourne. The synod calls the Melbourne Church to journey together in communion, participation and mission, echoing Pope Francis' vision of a 'listening Church' (Evangelii Gaudium, §31). Informed by Vatican II's teaching, the Church is 'a people made one with the unity of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit' (Lumen Gentium, §4).

There are three themes about which the church of Melbourne is being invited to discern:

- young discipleship
- missionary leadership
- formation and participation.

The synod assembly will be held across the weekend of 4–6 December 2026. Over these next months, a range of opportunities will be available for Melbourne Catholics to be part of the consultation process toward the synod. In the meantime, further information can be accessed at melbournecatholic.org/synod2026.

In the synodal Church 'the whole community, in the free and rich diversity of its members, is called together to pray, listen, analyse, dialogue, discern and offer advice on taking pastoral decisions (ITC 68) for mission' (Final Document, §87).

Letter from the Archbishop of Melbourne is available in the narthex.

2026 PATRICK ORATION

Archbishop Peter A Comensoli will celebrate the **St Patrick's Day Mass** at **6.00pm on Tuesday 17 March 2026** at **St Patrick's Cathedral.** The evening will include: **7.15pm:** the Patrick Oration delivered by the Archbishop. **8.00pm:** Refreshments will be served in the Cathedral grounds. As part of this year's Patrick Oration, Archbishop Peter will launch Light into the City. Bookings can be made via <https://www.trybooking.com/DJNKT>.

ST PETER'S PARISH, KEILOR EAST

2a Parkside Avenue

Keilor East Vic 3033

Administrator: Rev. Anil Mascarenhas

Parish Secretary: Helena Meredith

Phone: 03 9337 4141

Parish Office Hours: 8.30am–4.00pm Tuesday, Wednesday & Friday

Email: keiloreast@cam.org.au

Website:

<https://www.melb.catholic.org/keiloreast>

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/St-Peters-Parish-Keilor-East-248965765799277>

ST PETER'S PRIMARY SCHOOL

Acting Principal: Anne Tadinac

Phone: 03 9337 4111

Email:

principal@spkeiloreast.catholic.edu.au

Administration: Kate Wilson

MASS TIMES

Weekend Mass Times:

9.15am Saturday Morning Mass

6.00pm Saturday Vigil Mass

8.30am, 10.30am & 5.00pm Sunday Masses

*Weekday Mass Times

9.15am Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday

*7.00pm Fridays After Stations of the Cross

(*No 9.15am Friday Morning Mass during Lent)

RECONCILIATION

9.45am Saturday after 9.15am Mass (or upon request of Parish Priest)

ST PETER'S PRIMARY SCHOOL

PREP ENROLMENTS 2027 – "OPEN DAYS"

Tuesday 10 March at 9.00am

Enrolment Applications close at 5pm on Monday 30th March 2026

Please contact the school on 9337 4111 for all enquiries.

The Parish of St Peter's, Keilor East and the Archdiocese of Melbourne are committed to the care, wellbeing and protection of children, young people and vulnerable people in our community.