

## THE SAMARITAN WOMAN HELPS US TO ENCOUNTER JESUS

*Third Sunday of Lent – 12 March 2023*



*Christ and the Woman of Samaria by Paolo Veronese c. 1550 | public domain*

### SUMMIT 2023

Last week online and today in the newsletter, we note that following on from the National Plenary Council decrees last year, Brisbane Archdiocese will convene a local Summit in May.

Archbishop Mark Coleridge has written a document titled:

*'WITH LAMPS ABLAZE – Apostolic Priorities for the Archdiocese of Brisbane from 2023.'*

Seven priorities have been identified:

1. Teaching Prayer
2. Reshaping Parish Communities
3. Bringing Cultural Communities to the Centre
4. Responding to Abuse and the Abused
5. Engaging Anew with First Nations Peoples
6. Implementing Integral Ecology
7. Embedding Synodal Governance

After the Summit will come an Archdiocesan Synod in 2024

*"to embed the decisions and decrees of the Plenary Council in the life and mission of the Archdiocese and set in train a regular rhythm of Archdiocesan Synods". "... Synodality implies inclusion, and therefore we will have to keep asking how we might at every level include women in the decision-making processes of the Archdiocese".*

### THIS LENT

During this season of Lent, as we reflect

- on our *conversations* with God,
- on the *questions* we ask God,
- on *what* God says to us,
- on what God *reveals* to us about ourselves
- on how we grow in understanding of our *mission* in life
- on ways that we *witness* to others about God
- on ways that we *invite others* to come to God

- on the *2023 Summit priorities* and preparation for the *2024 Synod*
- on preparing for a *new Parish Priest* in August

we take time to wonder and pray about today's reading from John's Gospel 4:5-42.

### JESUS AND THE SAMARITAN WOMAN AT THE WELL

Throughout the Catholic Churches in Australia, and around the world, we hear this passage about the Samaritan woman's encounter with Jesus at Jacob's well.

The conversation turns into an invitation to know God more clearly.

The Samaritan woman is aware of the restrictions, the cultural separation, the negative views between Jew and Samaritan.

Yet the conversation continues and turns to faith in God.

The woman becomes a witness by going and sharing the Good News of Jesus to the people in her village.

They come to see Jesus for themselves.

They rely not only on her testimony, but now they encounter Jesus as well.

Being inspired by Jesus in today's Gospel, we can uplift the spirit of others.

And witness to Jesus who accompanies us in love during this difficult time.

In our mission we witness to the depth of God's love,

as we work together as family, as community.

### WE TAKE THE PLACE OF THE SAMARITAN WOMAN

Today we are invited to take the place of the Samaritan woman as we hear the encounter unfold.

She has the courage to ask and question.

May we have the courage to ask and question.

Her dialogue with Jesus develops, she changes, she shares, she invites others.

May our relationship with Jesus deepen during these forty days of Lent,

as we change and share and invite others to Jesus.

The Samaritan woman at the well becomes a disciple.

She carries the 'Good News' to her village.

May we carry the Good News to other people.

### GOSPEL OF JOHN 4:5-42

Let us ponder some points in the conversation in today's Gospel.

*'The Samaritan woman said to him,*

*'How is it that you, a Jew, ask a drink of me, a woman of Samaria?'*

(Jews do not share things in common 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.'"*

### OVERCOMING BARRIERS, SHARING OUR VULNERABILITY

Both Jesus and the Samaritan woman break down the male/female and Jewish/Samaritan taboos and speak to each other.

Both Jesus and the Samaritan risked so much to even dialogue.

They could be penalised heavily for having a conversation. Both were vulnerable.

Dialogue for us at times can involve

- courage, hope, energy, patience, listening
- a desire to understand and make a difference.
- and recognising the vulnerability of each other.

### JESUS INVITES US TO BE FREE

A freedom ensues as Jesus and the Samaritan woman talk.

A freedom in overcoming gender and ethnic and cultural and religious prejudices.

The Samaritan woman claims her freedom.

We are invited this Lent to claim our freedom to make a difference.

### LIVING WATER

Let us continue reading from the Gospel passage.

*“Jesus said to her,*

*‘Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again,  
but those who drink of the water that I will give them will never be thirsty.  
The water that I will give will become in them a spring of water gushing up to  
eternal life.’*

Jesus offers living water, a gift of God.

We take time to recognise the living water with us.

[pause]

It quenches our spiritual thirst. It moves as a spring of life within us.

*‘Jesus said to her,*

*... But the hour is coming, and is now here,  
when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth,  
for the Father seeks such as these to worship him.  
God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.’*

### WE PRAY

Loving God,

May we worship You in spirit and truth.

May we discover the freedom to overcome the barriers that divide people.

May our relationship with You, deepen during these forty days of Lent,  
as we change, and share, and invite others to You.

Amen.

Father Gerry

Readings: <https://bible.usccb.org/bible/readings/031223.cfm>

Additional information:

[XVI Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops](#)