

**While we are unable to meet as a Church for these 15 days, we offer a reading, thought and prayers in the hope that you will feel united with all who make up our Chaplaincy at this time – both regulars and visitors alike.**

By using the reading/s, prayers and psalms set for today, we also join our fellow Christians around the world who will also be praying these words and reading these scriptures at different times and in very different places today – so we join them in praising God and praying for one another... we are never alone!

### **The Collect for this Sunday – Lent 3**

Almighty God,

whose most dear Son went not up to joy but first he suffered pain,

and entered not into glory before he was crucified:

mercifully grant that we, walking in the way of the cross,

may find it none other than the way of life and peace;

through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,

who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit,

one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

### **The Psalm (95) set for this Sunday:**

O come, let us sing to the Lord; let us heartily rejoice in the rock of our salvation.

Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving and be glad in him with psalms.

For the Lord is a great God and a great king above all gods.

In his hands are the depths of the earth

and the heights of the mountains are his also.

The sea is his, for he made it, and his hands have moulded the dry land.

Come, let us worship and bow down and kneel before the Lord our Maker.

For he is our God; we are the people of his pasture and the sheep of his hand.

O that today you would listen to his voice:

‘Harden not your hearts as at Meribah, on that day at Massah in the wilderness,

‘When your forebears tested me, and put me to the proof,

though they had seen my works.

‘Forty years long I detested that generation and said,

‘This people are wayward in their hearts; they do not know my ways.’

“So I swore in my wrath, ‘They shall not enter into my rest.’”

### **Gospel reading for Sunday 15 March - John 4:5-13, 15, 19-26, 39-42**

Jesus came to a Samaritan city called Sychar, near the plot of ground that Jacob had given to his son Joseph. Jacob’s well was there, and Jesus, tired out by his journey, was sitting by the well. It was about noon. A Samaritan woman came to draw water, and Jesus said to her, “Give me a drink.” (His disciples had gone to the city to buy food.) 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.” The woman said to him, “Sir, you have no bucket, and the well is deep. Where do you get that living water? Are you greater than our ancestor Jacob, who gave us the well, and with his sons and his flocks drank from it?” 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.” The woman said to him, “Sir, give me this water, so that I may never be thirsty or have to keep coming here to draw water.”

“Sir, I see that you are a prophet. Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain, but you say that the place where people must worship is in Jerusalem.” Jesus said to her, “Woman,

believe me, 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 know, for salvation is from the Jews. But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers 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.”

The woman said to him, “I know that Messiah is coming” (who is called Christ). “When he comes, he will proclaim all things to us.” Jesus said to her, “I am he, the one who is speaking to you.”

Many Samaritans from that city believed in him because of the woman’s testimony, “He told me everything I have ever done.” 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 truly the Saviour of the world.”

### **Just a thought...**

This passage is about so many different things, but it’s significant that, as he often does, Jesus chooses a person whose life is beyond convention, in order to reveal truth. It’s to her that he reveals himself as the Messiah and living water. Her response is to go immediately to those very people who might have shunned her and tell them about Jesus.

When we, as Christians, take time to be with people who are not part of our usual circles – when we listen, observe, respect and take seriously the lives of others, as Jesus did – we can learn fresh truths and discover the power of Christ to transform. We may all too easily describe Jesus as the living water and source of our life when we are in church, but it’s in the honest conversations, beyond those walls, when we discover what this really means. It’s also worth noting that Jesus began his spiritual conversation in a practical way – he needed a drink.

As we enter a new week, lets consider this - Could it be that in our very practical concerns for others, in what is a very worrying time for many people, we actually meet the source of life himself?

Eternal God and Father, we thirst for your love,

we long for your presence, we yearn for your peace.

Come, Lord, restore us that we may live to your glory;

through him who gives us the water of life, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

## Prayers

*Whoever drinks of the water I shall give him will never be thirsty (John 4:14)*

Gracious Father, today we face a world in chaos where the very fabric of society seems out of control. Like the woman at the well, our present and our future seem vulnerable and it is to you that we cry for help and peace. We pray for the different groups affected by the current crisis:

For the politicians who have to make major decisions touching everybody's lives, Lord we ask that you will give them understanding of the situation, wisdom to make the right decisions, and the courage to lead with compassion. Lord we ask for those who lead in our home countries, and for the authorities here in Spain that we may have confidence in the leadership they offer and that there may be obedience amongst the populations.

**Lord in your mercy: Hear our prayer.**

For all medical personnel involved in the care of those impacted by the virus. Lord we thank you for their skills and their willingness to expose themselves to the risks associated with their care of others. We ask that their resources will be sufficient to limit the spread of the virus, and that those seeking a solution to the virus might be given the understanding needed to develop appropriate vaccines.

But most of all Lord, we look to you that where human initiative is inadequate, your healing hand may touch with loving care all those who are afraid or suffering.

(A moment of silence as we remember those known to us in need at the moment.)

**Lord in your mercy: Hear our prayer.**

Lord, in moments of crisis such as this, people's minds are turned toward you. Just as the woman at the well sought in You the eternal answers to her daily needs, we pray that your message of hope and assurance will bring comfort and faith to the many. We pray for your church throughout the world, and especially in our Chaplaincy, that we may through practical demonstration show your love to those seeking an answer to their need. May our

lives demonstrate a deep trust in You for all that lies ahead, and may we have the confidence to share love for others in ways which will glorify you.

**Merciful Father:**

**Accept these prayers for the sake of your Son our Saviour Jesus Christ.**

## **Blessing**

The almighty Father refresh you,

The loving Saviour redeem you,

The life-giving Spirit restore you;

and the blessing of God almighty,

the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,

be with us all, now and always. Amen.

The two links below are also provided for the Church of England's Live Lent project and Daily Prayer.

[#LiveLent: Care for God's Creation | The Church of England](#)

[Join us in a service of Daily Prayer | The Church of England](#)