



**Third Sunday of Lent**  
**† Sunday 19th March 2017**

Cycle of Prayer: Candidates for the Sacraments & the Needy and Hungry  
Keynote: The living waters of faith

**Book of Exodus 17: 3-7**

*‘Tormented by thirst, the people complained against Moses: “Why did you bring us out of Egypt?” they said, “was it so that I might die of thirst, my children and cattle too?” Moses appealed to the Lord: “How am I to deal with these people?” At God’s bidding, Moses takes the elders, and goes to the rock at Horeb. ‘You must strike the rock,’ says the Lord God, ‘and water will flow from it for the people to drink. This is what Moses did, in the sight of the elders of Israel.’ Tested by thirst, tested in faith, tested by circumstance, we too may be tempted to test God too. Recall this event in the desert, ask ourselves, ‘Is the Lord God with us, or not?’ Then look to the gospel today, ‘anyone who drinks the water that I shall give,’ says Jesus, ‘will never be thirsty again’.*

**Responsorial Psalm 94 [95]** – A processional hymn of praise

**Letter of Paul to the Romans 5: 1-2, 5-8**

*‘Through our Lord Jesus Christ,’ says Paul, ‘by faith we are judged righteous and we are 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.’ We are tested in life, tested by circumstances, events and faith but Paul says: ‘This hope is not deceptive because the love of God has been poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit which has been given to us.’ There is no suggestion that the Christian can somehow earn this grace of justification, for Paul concludes, ‘What proves that God loves us is that Christ died for us while we were still sinners.’*

**Gospel according to John 4: 5-42**

Jacob’s Well is sited at a crossroads in life and we have the dialogue about living water. The water from this well is important, for the womenfolk come every day to draw water for their home use. Jesus breaks all the cultural and religious ‘rules’ by asking a Samaritan, and a woman, for a drink of water! Jews and Samaritans wouldn’t even pass the time of day, and for a man to ask a woman is unheard of! The conversation is intriguing. Jesus shows her that he knows that of her five husbands the one she now lives with is no husband. Then he reminds her, *‘Whoever drinks this water will get thirsty again,’* a fact that the woman must have been only too aware. *‘But anyone who drinks the water that I shall give,’* says Jesus, *‘will never be thirsty again: the water that I shall give will turn into a spring inside, welling up to eternal life.’* The woman is eager in her request, *‘Sir,’* she says, *‘give me some of that water, so that I may never get thirsty and never have to come here again to draw water.’* Jesus then reveals to this stranger that he is the promised Messiah. The woman puts down her water jar and runs back to the village with the good news! Staying there for a couple of days, Jesus taught them, and, *‘many more came to believe; they said to the women, “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.”* Sharing the good news, evangelisation is at the heart of this gospel passage, and we are all evangelists – bearers of the good news. This woman of Samaria is the one of the first to bring the good news!

Note: Solemnity of Saint Joseph – Spouse of BVM on Monday 20th March 2017  
Solemnity of Annunciation of the Lord on Saturday 25th March 2017  
Clocks forwards – British Summer Time