



Sacred Heart Parish Bulletin

Mass: 9:30 am – Sunday
Fr. John Yake, I. V. Dei
(902) 535-2053 – Fax: 535-3127

March 12, 2023

Third Sunday in Lent

The **First Reading** is taken from the *Book of Exodus 17:3-7*. The Israelites, the Chosen People of God, were suffering slavery and the threat of total extermination in Egypt; God miraculously set them free and, with Moses as their leader, he led them towards the promised land of Canaan. But they soon forgot what God had done for them and began to murmur and rebel because of the difficulties of the long desert journey. One of these rebellious murmurings is put before us today.

The **Second Reading** is from the *St. Paul's Letter to the Romans 5:1-2; 5-8*. This brief section is an encouragement to all who have been given the gift of the Christian faith to persevere in spite of adversity.

The **Gospel** is from *St. John 4:5-42*. This gospel, about the Samaritan woman, is exceptionally rich. Every time we read it we are passionately moved by that intense conversation between Jesus and the Samaritan woman. The Holy Father, Pope Benedict XVI, recalling the great teaching of Saint Augustine, with regard to Christ's request to the woman, "give me something to drink", said: "Yes, God thirsts for our faith and our love. As a good and merciful father, he wants our total, possible good, and this good is he himself. The Samaritan woman, on the other hand, represents the existential dissatisfaction of one who does not find what he seeks. She had "five husbands" and now she lives with another man; her going to and from the well to draw water expresses a repetitive and resigned life.

However, everything changes for her that day, thanks to the conversation with the Lord Jesus....." (Benedict XVI, Angelus 24 February 2008).

To recognize that if we entrust ourselves to God, we receive every "possible good" which, as the Pope reminds us, is God himself, means living the dynamic of conversion to God: renouncing a self-centered mentality, which deceives self-sufficient man, in order to receive the gift of God. Man without God is inevitably destined to dissatisfaction, limited in everything by his own limits as a creature, even in "giving himself" or "obtaining for himself" joy, love, happiness... Man without God cannot think to reach boundless joy, unlimited and eternal love, the living water of which, precisely, Jesus speaks with the Samaritan woman.

Happiness, another word for the living water, can only be given by the One who possesses it, and man does not possess it. God alone can share it with those who place their trust in Him and follow Him.

The living water, the gift of the Holy Spirit, can only be given by the Lord Jesus whom the Father sent into the world to give to all men and women eternal life, that is, never ending happiness. As the Pope reminds us "only the water that Jesus offers, the living water of the Spirit, can quench" man's "thirst for the infinite" (Benedict XVI, homily 24 February 2008). Man is able to give his fellow humans, affection, money, power, human glory, honor, career ... but not endless happiness which, since it is an unlimited good, belongs to the divine, infinite sphere!

The living water flows only from the divine source. The Samaritan woman went to a well which was deep, but limited, whereas unlimited was her thirst for happiness and love. The woman, the Holy Father tells us, "represents the existential dissatisfaction of one who does not find what he seeks".

How often man seeks the infinite, the eternal, well-being...but sadly continues to seek it in a well, in a reality, the earthly reality, which is unable to contain it. How many wells, deep but empty, how many wells of stagnant water, we have met on our way! We carry within us immense desires and easily deceive ourselves that we can meet them.

On our path of conversion, what a great grace it is to find the Lord Jesus waiting patiently for us beside our senseless wells. When, like the Samaritan woman, we are tired of the things of this world, of almost empty wells, then the Divine Master is especially close to us. He asks us to give him something to drink, he asks us to trust Him to satiate our heart and if we trust in Him we discover the joy of finding the true well, the source of crystal clear water.

Then, as if in a dream, as it was for the Samaritan woman, everything which before was important, no longer counts, true reality is something else, it becomes that Man-God who begs to give Himself! The secret of happiness is to invert the process of selfishness: to forget self in order to make room for Another Person, the Lord of life and happiness. Give up self and find God! If I renounce sin, I find grace, if I renounce myself, I find God and my brothers and sisters. "If you only knew what God is offering," happiness is what He wants to give you! How often a priest should ask himself this question, or a woman who wonders "shall I have a child or not", "am I thinking of myself, or of the child who cannot come into the world without my help?" If you knew what gift of Life, you would throw yourself into that well and there you would find the strength to renounce self.

Mother Teresa of Calcutta, with wisdom typical of saints, explained why we should give ourselves to God: “Why should we give ourselves completely to God? Because God has given Himself to us. If God who owes us nothing is ready to give us nothing less than Himself, can we respond with only a small part of ourselves? Giving ourselves totally to God is a way of receiving God. I am for God and God is for me. I live for God and renounce myself, in this way I allow God to live for me. To possess God we must allow Him to possess our souls. (Blessed Teresa di Calcutta).

— Mgr Luciano Alimandi, *Ave Maria*, Agenzia Fides 27/2/2008

Collection
March 05, 2023

Envelopes	\$215.00
Heat	\$175.00
	\$390.00

NOTICES:

1: Fish Cake Supper - Friday April 7th, 3:30 pm Eat In or Take Out - Fish Cakes, Homemade Beans, Chow, Biscuits, Cost \$12.00, Johnstown Parish Hall

2: Johnstown Landing Outdoor Farmer’s Market: We are pleased to announce the second season of the Johnstown Landing Outdoor Farmer’s Market. This year the Market will operate 10 am to 1 pm every **SUNDAY** from June 25 to September 24. Interested vendors should contact johnstownlanding@gmail.com or Rita Campbell 902-631-0209. **Note:** vendors do not need to commit to attending every week. Johnstown Landing is located across from the Johnstown Parish Hall.

3: St Joseph Lenten Lecture Series

St Joseph Parish in North Sydney is hosting a lecture series at St. Joseph Hall on Wednesday evenings at 6:30 pm during lent. 34 Archibald Avenue, North Sydney. Side door of St Joseph Parish Hall

6:30 pm - Lecture, 7:15 pm - Questions, tea & coffee

March 15th - History of the Industrial Areas of CBRM & Diocese of Antigonish by Dr. Peter Ludlow.

March 22nd - Ms. Kathleen MacKenzie - Early history of St. Joseph Parish and Parishioners

4: Cape Breton Chorale and Elmer Iseler Singers Concert

Voices in Song Choral Concert with The Elmer Iseler Singers, (Lydia Adams, Conductor/Artistic Director, Shawn Grenke, Piano/Organ) and Cape Breton Chorale, Directed by Ryan Billington with Paula Jane Francis on piano and organ.

March 14, 2023, Time: 8:00 PM

Location: Church of Christ the King, Sydney

Tickets: \$35/ \$30 for Seniors by calling (902) 270-2591, online at capebretonchorale.com, or from Chorale Members.

5: History of Catholics in the Industrial Areas of CBRM by Diocesan Historian Dr. Peter Ludlow

Wednesday March 15th

2 pm - Lecture & questions

CBU Chaplaincy in Campus Centre (next to cafeteria and Book store)

1250 Grand Lake Road, Sydney N.S.

3 pm - Book Signing of his latest book, *Disciples of Antigonish: Catholics in Nova Scotia 1880-1960*. \$40 per book

All are welcome, refreshments provided

Biography:

A historian of religion and culture in Canada, Dr. Peter Ludlow holds a PhD from Queen's University Belfast, is the former president of the Canadian Catholic Historical Association, and currently serves as Editor of Canada’s only scholarly journal dedicated to the history of Catholicism. Widely published, his first book, *The Canny Scot: Archbishop James Morrison of Antigonish* was released by McGill-Queen’s University Press in 2015. His latest book, *Disciples of Antigonish: Catholics in Nova Scotia 1880-1960*, also published by McGill-Queen’s, is a social history of one of Canada’s most important Catholic regions.

6: On March 13, 2023 our Holy Father Pope Francis celebrates the 10th anniversary of his election as successor of St. Peter. We pray that God will grant him wisdom, grace, and continued health as he shepherds the Church of Christ on Earth.