

Celebrating the Season of Lent



Theme: A Deeper Vision

According to the Gospel of John, early in Jesus' ministry he encounters a woman at a well who is drawing water at midday. Transcending the social norms of his day, Jesus engages the woman in conversation. Through the give and take of human interaction, of human conversation, the woman slowly comes to believe in Jesus. So excited by her newfound faith, she rushes into her village to share the good news with the townspeople. Similarly, the townspeople, through their interaction with Jesus, likewise come to faith.

Like any good story, the encounter between the Samaritan woman at the well and Jesus is powerful because it sheds light on what it means to be human. We see in her story, our own story, we see something of our own journey. The story of the Samaritan woman rings true because in a way, she is each of us. Why? How? Her story possesses the power to remind each of us how we came to believe, whether there was a particularly powerful moment or more likely, a process full of moments that watered the seed of faith to grow into a beautiful flower. Her excitement challenges us to reflect on what our faith means to us. Her willingness to share her experience with the townspeople calls us to consider what our faith is asking of each of us, to consider the shape and substance of our lives in light of our faith. During this Third Week of Lent, and beyond, let us take advantage of this unique opportunity to remember, to remember how we came to believe, what our belief means to us, and where our belief is leading us. When I reflect on the story of the Samaritan woman, I just might discover the invitation to a more authentic, more faith-filled, more meaningful life.

Prayers

Prayer for Monday of the Third Week of Lent

Faithful God,

Like the Samaritan woman, we have our own faults and failings that make us want to hide from the ridicule of others, and ultimately from you. However, you remain ever faithful to us, loving us and guiding us back to you. Help us to see your faith in us as an example of the way we should live with trust in you. In the light of our growing faith, we pray. Amen.

Prayer for Tuesday of the Third Week of Lent

Trusting God,

To have faith in someone means to have complete trust in that person. The Samaritan woman had a lack of faith in the people of her community, but through her encounter with Jesus, she came to renew her trust in herself and in others. During these Lenten days, help us to reflect on our trust in Jesus, knowing that through faith we will come to know him more deeply. Trusting in your love, we pray. Amen.

Prayer for Wednesday of the Third Week of Lent

Insightful God,

Our vision of faith is often skewed by many social factors. We can be encouraged to pursue one direction, only to discover we should have taken another path. Help us to be more balanced in our faith by remaining close to you, trusting that you will guide us on the right path each day. For your faithful guidance, we pray. Amen.

Prayer for Thursday of the Third Week of Lent

True God,

We have come to understand that the best way to live our lives is being our true selves. However, so many outside influences often deter us from being authentic. Draw us closer to you, strengthening us in our efforts to lead authentic lives, so that we know the joy of living in and by your truth. For this we pray, Amen.

Prayer for Friday of the Third Week of Lent

God of Kindness,

The kindness that Jesus showed the Samaritan woman allowed her to see your love, rekindling her faith in you. Help us today and every day to show a similar kindness to all those we meet, regardless of race, creed, ethnicity, gender, or origin. May our acts of kindness spread your love to all throughout the Lenten season and beyond. Amen.

Questions for Reflection

What concretely do I plan to do to participate in the season of Lent and how will it draw me closer to God?

How will my participation in the season of Lent renew my commitment to extend the compassionate ministry of Jesus to others, especially people who are poor and vulnerable?

What must I do to deepen my faith and trust in God during the season of Lent?