



**The Catholic Parishes of
ST. JOSEPH SACRED HEART ST. PATRICK**

Stanley

Byermoor

Dipton

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Listen to the Word

12th March 2023

Third Sunday of Lent

Exodus 17: 3-7 | Psalm 94 | Romans 5: 1-2; 5-8 | John 5-42

The Gospel passages in Year A of the Lectionary are centred on a series of encounters. We encountered the Devil and his work in the world in the first week; last week we were joined to Moses and Elijah as we walked the mountain of the transfiguration and received a glimpse of a heavenly future. Today we meet a very different character - the woman of Samaria - and she opens our eyes to the message of Lent, and how our personal encounter with Jesus can change our lives.

In the desert there are places where fresh water can be found just below the surface. Each morning the wild beasts visit these places to quench their thirst, then the local people come along to fill their vessels with sufficient water for their daily needs. Water brings life: without it, life cannot exist. Nobody ventures out in the noon day sun; the heat is oppressive and even the easiest task is difficult. Carrying water is not an easy task.

Today we encounter a vulnerable Christ: He is thirsty, He can see the water but has no means with which to access it. He has no cup. Then a woman comes along: she is a Samaritan. Coming at the noon of the day signals her as an outcast from the village: Jewish men do not speak to lone women; Jews do not speak to Samaritans. The rules of morality, of the Law, are about to be broken, shattered by a simple request: "Give me a drink".

As the conversation deepens, we become aware that Jesus is making Himself vulnerable so the vulnerable can feel safe. He opens himself up so that others can see the loving God within. He risks all to bring a soul to faith. He speaks of living water, the water that we can drink through the sacrament of Baptism. He speaks of worshipping in spirit, the way that we can follow through prayer and good actions, and finally He reveals Himself: "I am He" and the woman comes to faith.

The Gospel passage is open to many interpretations. Read it slowly and let the words fire your imagination. We have all been in vulnerable situations and often our encounters in these places have had a real effect in our lives. Jesus is the Water of Life: He can quench our thirst, He can mend what was broken. If we open our hearts, He will enter in.

David Frank

PRAY FOR THOSE THAT NEED HEALING IN OUR PARISHES:

Anne Kennedy, Margaret Convey, Maureen Dixon and Danny Fagan

Saturday 11 th March	Sacred Heart Church	4:30pm	Mass: MARY HESLIN
Sunday 12 th March 3rd Sunday in Lent	St Patrick's Church St Joseph's Church St Patrick's Church	9:00am 11:00am 5:00pm	Mass: ISAIAH RAINE Mass: PEOPLE OF THE PARTNERSHIP Stations of the Cross and Benediction
Monday 13 th March			
Tuesday 14 th March	St Joseph's Church	9:30am	VERA PEARSON
Wednesday 15 th March	Sacred Heart Church Sacred Heart Church	7:00pm 7:30pm	Mass: PAUL MOSLEY Stations of the Cross
Thursday 16 th March	St Joseph's Church	9:30am	Mass: FR JOSEPH PARK
Friday 17 th March St Patrick's Day	St Joseph's Church St Joseph's Church	9:30am 10:00am	Mass: VERA PEARSON Stations of the Cross
Saturday 18 th March	Sacred Heart Church	4:30pm	Mass: CANON HOLLIS
Sunday 19 th March 4th Sunday in Lent	St Patrick's Church St Joseph's Church St Joseph's Church St Patrick's Church	9:00am 11:00am 12:30pm 5:00pm	Mass: PEOPLE OF THE PARTNERSHIP Mass: PATRICIA LEE TELFORD Baptism: R Swift Stations of the Cross and Benediction

MASS INTENTIONS for our parishes are most welcome. Please be aware that weekend Masses are booked at least 3 months in advance. At Sacred Heart Church, there are Masses in for the next 3 months. Please let us know if you are content for Mass to be said in St Joseph's or St Patrick's. We also have gaps in our weekday schedule.

SICK AND HOUSEBOUND Please contact the Parish Office if you know anyone sick/housebound who would like to receive Holy Communion.

STATIONS OF THE CROSS Stations of the Cross will take place on Wednesday evenings at around 7:30pm (after Mass) at St Patrick's on 8th, 22nd March and 5th April, and at Sacred Heart on 15th, 29th March, as well as on Fridays at St Joseph's after Mass. On Sundays, Stations of the Cross and Benediction will be at St Patrick's at 5.00pm.

CATHOLIC MOTHERS NORTH EAST A new group for Catholic Mothers will begin to meet at St Teresa's, Annfield Plain on Monday 17th April 9.30-11am. Join us for coffee, cake, chats, prayer and to share ideas about what the group could do to support each other in Catholic motherhood. All welcome, including children. For more information see the group 'Catholic Mothers North East' on Facebook or email catholicmothersne@gmail.com.

PROUD CATHOLICS – STATIONS OF THE CROSS Do you identify as LGBT+ or are you questioning your sexual or gender identity? Would you like to attend a support group run by and for LGBT+ Catholics in the North East? We meet on the third Tuesday of the month at 7.30pm at St Andrew's RC Church, Worswick St. Our next meeting will be on **Tuesday, 21st March at 7.30pm**. To continue our journey through Lent, we will be praying with the Stations of the Cross. It will be possible to connect through Zoom if you are unable to join us in person. Please get in touch for the link. For more information, phone Isabel on 07858 934457, email proud.catholics@yahoo.com, or visit our website www.proud.catholics.co.uk

SACRED HEART PLANNED GIVING DONATIONS The new planned giving envelopes can be collected from the back of the church on 19th and 26th March. The new envelopes **must not** be used until the weekend of 2nd April 2023. Thank you.

VACANCY The Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle has the following vacancy: **Administrator, Vicariate for Faith and Mission (maternity cover)** – full-time. Closing date: 15 March 2023. Please visit www.diocesehn.org.uk for full details or contact us on 0191 243 3301.

Collections 5 th Mar	Offertory Tot.5 th Mar	Weekly Stand. Order	Family Fast Day	Lenten Alms
St Joseph's	£332.66	£197.25	£10.00	£-----
St Patrick's	£82.25	£157.15	£114.30	£12.60
Sacred Heart	£124.05	£78.46	£94.70	£6.00

★ The St Patrick's March coffee morning raised £73.70 ★