



*Drawing by John R Hume,
courtesy of Scotland's Churches Trust*

St Mary Magdalene's Church

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Monsignor Charles Hendry - Parish Priest
Rev. Krzysztof Jablonski (07851 735590) - Permanent Deacon

3rd Sunday of Lent A 15th March 2020

God's mercy is without limit

On this Sunday and the next two Sundays, we break from reading the Gospel of Matthew to read from John's Gospel. The Gospel of John is the only Gospel not assigned to a particular liturgical year. Instead, readings from John's Gospel are interspersed throughout our three-year liturgical cycle.

In today's Gospel, the dialogue between Jesus and a woman from Samaria is among the most lengthy and most theological found in Scripture. The most startling aspect of the conversation is that it happens at all. Jesus, an observant Jew of that time, was expected to avoid conversation with women in public. The animosity between the Jews and the Samaritans should have prevented the conversation as well.

The woman herself alludes to the break from tradition: "How can you, a Jew, ask me, a Samaritan woman, for a drink?" Yet Jesus not only converses with the woman, he also asks to share her drinking vessel, an action that makes him unclean according to Jewish law.

For today's Mass

Responsorial Psalm

O that today
you would listen to his voice:
'Harden not your hearts.'

Gospel Acclamation

Lord, you are really
the Saviour of the world;
give me living water,
so that I may never
get thirsty.

The initial conversation between Jesus and the woman is better understood if we consider the importance of water, especially in the climate of Israel. At first, the woman understands Jesus' promise of "living water" in a literal sense: "Sir, give me this water, so that I may not be thirsty or have to keep coming here to draw water."

With no running water, the daily trip to the well by the women of the community was of paramount importance. The women of the town would have travelled to the well in the early morning, but this woman came to the well at noon, the hottest time of the day. The timing of her visit is a clear sign that she is an outcast within the Samaritan community. We learn in her conversation with Jesus that she is an outcast because of her "many husbands."

Behind the conversation lies the animosity and rivalry between the Jews and the Samaritans. Samaritans shared Jewish ancestry, but Samaritans had intermarried with foreigners when they lived under the rule of the Assyrians. Samaritan religion included worship of Yahweh, but was also influenced by the worship of other gods.

When the Jews refused Samaritan help in the building of the Temple at Jerusalem, the Samaritans eventually built a temple for themselves at Mt. Gerizim (the same mountain mentioned by the woman at the well).

Like the Jews, the Samaritans believed that a Messiah would come.

The high point of the conversation is when Jesus reveals himself to her as the Messiah. His answer to the Samaritan woman's questions about worship is meant to predict a time when worshiping in truth and spirit will become the way to worship.

After the conversation, the Samaritan woman becomes a disciple. Even though she is an outcast and not a Jew, she returns to her town to lead others to Jesus and to wonder whether she has found the Messiah. The Samaritan townspeople return with her to meet Jesus for themselves, and many are said to come to believe in him.

The significance of the encounter between Jesus and the Samaritan woman has many levels. The first is personal: The woman is herself converted to belief in Jesus as Messiah because he knows her sin but speaks with her just the same. The second is social: Having come to know Jesus as the Messiah, the Samaritan woman becomes an evangelist to her own people.

The third level of the story is educational: Jesus uses his encounter with the Samaritan woman to teach his disciples that God's mercy is without limit.

The disciples return from their shopping quite confused to find Jesus talking with a Samaritan, and a woman at that! But the conversion of the Samaritan townspeople is a foretaste of the kind of open community that will be created among those who believe that Jesus is the Messiah.

AROUND PERTH

Mass in

St Mary Magdalene's, Craigie

10am - Sunday

8am - Weekdays

(except Wednesday and Saturday)

7am - Wednesday; 10am - Saturday

Sunday Mass in

Our Lady of Lourdes, Letham

5.30pm (vigil); 11am

Sunday Mass in

St Mary's, Kinnoull

10am

Sunday Mass in St John's

4pm (anticipated Mass); 9am; 11am,

5pm (Polish) & 6.30pm

PRAYERS

Please pray for the repose
of the soul

of Margaret Martin,
Susan McLaren and Eddie Ware
and for the souls of all
the faithful departed.

**Eternal rest grant
unto their souls, O Lord.
May they rest in peace.
Amen**

FEASTDAYS THIS WEEK

Tuesday 17th March

St Patrick

8am Mass

Thursday 19th March

St Joseph

8am Mass

Stations of the Cross

There will be Stations of the Cross
after 10am Mass on Saturdays during
Lent.

Faith Sharing Groups

The materials for the Lenten Faith
Sharing Programme introduced in
Perth by Deacon Len Moir are now
available on the Diocesan website for
download - please find them in the RE
Resources menu.

Virus protection

Bishop Stephen has provided advice
to parishes with contingency measures
during the current outbreak of Corona-
virus (COVID 19).

These include everyone maintaining
good hygiene - including good hand
washing/ safe disposal of tissues...

- Priests and Extra-Ordinary Ministers
of the Eucharist, before proceeding
to the sanctuary, to discreetly wash
their hands (or use good quality
hand gel) with warm water and soap.
- The Holy Water stoops for bless-
ing at the entrance to the Church to
be emptied (as on Good Friday and
Holy Saturday). We can still bless
ourselves as we enter the Church but
without using Holy Water.
- The Sign of Peace to be suspended
until further notice to avoid unneces-
sary contact.
- Communicants to receive Holy
Communion in the hand rather than
on the tongue - or, if not, then care
must be taken not to be infected by
salivary contact.
- Only the priest ought to communi-
cate from the Chalice to complete
the Eucharistic Sacrifice. Communi-
cation from the chalice to be sus-
pended until further notice.
- Only the Priest Celebrant or Assist-
ing Deacon should purify the Sacred
Vessels - paten, chalice and ciborium
- used at Mass.

Collection

Last Sunday's collection amounted
to £532.23. Thank you for your gen-
erosity.

SCIAF BOXES

SCIAF's WEE BOXES are available
in the porch for your Lenten Almsgiv-
ing - please take one away and return
it when you come along to the services
on Holy Thursday. (A new supply will
arrive during the coming week).

Messages

If you are in urgent need of a priest
- please bear in mind that Mgr Hendry
is no longer driving - but should you
wish to speak to him please telephone
- on 01738 643418 - and speak slowly
and clearly and - if necessary - be ready
to leave an answer phone message -
**together with your name and phone
number.** Thank you for your patience.

Italian classes

Classes for beginners and for speak-
ers at all levels take place in St John's
Church Hall on Saturdays at 4.15pm.
All welcome.

Italian Stations

There will be Stations of the Cross
in Italian in St John's, on Saturdays at
2pm, during Lent.

Lent Retreat

A retreat based on the Spiritual Exercises of St Ignatius Loyola is taking place
on Thursdays - being delivered in an accessible and up-to-date format.

DAILY PRAYER:

Material will be provided for people to pray with each day of Lent. This will
include Scripture readings, meditations, pictures and full instructions.

Our Local Group is led by

Mary O'Duffin,

Meeting in Perth Riverside Church, Bute Drive, Perth. PH1 3BG

Now at 6.30pm every Thursday

6.30pm - THURSDAY EVENINGS

... 19th, 26th March

2nd April, then, after Holy Week,

final two sessions on 16th April and 23rd April.

ARE YOU GOING TO BE IN HOSPITAL? DO YOU KNOW OF SOMEONE WHO IS IN HOSPITAL?

Name _____ **Hospital** _____ **Ward** _____

Please complete/ tear off and hand it to Mgr Hendry after Mass