

During this holy season, we examine and reflect upon our lives and call on God for aid. There are times in our lives—and this may be one of them—when we feel alone, abandoned. We may ask, as the Chosen People did when thirsting in the desert, “Is the LORD in our midst or not?” As we grow weary crossing the deserts in our life, let us remember Jesus’ words: “I am with you always.”

As we gather together let us begin our service by professing what we believe.

Profession of Faith: Page 20

I believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible. I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages. God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father; through him all things were made. For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven, (bow as we say) and by the Holy Spirit he was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate, he suffered death and was buried, and rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church. I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Introductory Rite:

Greeting:

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ. Blessed be God for ever.

Blessed be God for ever.

Penitential Rite:

My brothers and sisters, to prepare ourselves for this celebration, let us call to mind our sins.

Lord Jesus, you are the living water, a fountain of grace and mercy:

Lord, have mercy

Lord, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you are the living water, our peace and reconciliation:

Christ, have mercy

Christ, have mercy.

Lord Jesus, you are the living water, the way that leads to eternal life:

Lord, have mercy

Lord, have mercy.

May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive our sins, and bring us to everlasting life. **Amen.**

Opening Prayer:

O God, author of every mercy and of all goodness, who in fasting, prayer and almsgiving have shown us a remedy for sin, look graciously on this confession of our lowliness, that we, who are bowed down by our conscience, may always be lifted up by your mercy.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

Liturgy of the Word:

First Reading Page 74

A reading from the Book of Exodus

Exodus 17:3-7

In those days, in their thirst for water, the people grumbled against Moses, saying, “Why did you ever make us leave Egypt? Was it just to have us die of thirst with our children and our livestock?” So Moses cried to the Lord, “What shall I do with this people? A little more and they will stone me!” The Lord answered Moses, “Go over there in front of the people, along with some of the elders of Israel, holding in your hand, as you go, the staff with which

you struck the river. I will be standing there in front of you on the rock in Horeb. Strike the rock, and the water will flow from it for the people to drink.” This Moses did, in the presence of the elders of Israel. The place was called Massah and Meribah, because the Israelites quarreled there and tested the Lord, saying, “Is the Lord in our midst or not?”

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God

Responsorial Psalm Page 76

Psalm 95:1-2, 6-7, 8-9

R/. If today you hear his voice, harden not your hearts. **R/. If today you hear his voice, harden not your hearts.**

Come, let us sing joyfully to the Lord; / let us acclaim the Rock of our salvation.

Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving; / let us joyfully sing psalms to him. **R/.**

Come, let us bow down in worship; / let us kneel before the Lord who made us.

For he is our God, / and we are the people he shepherds, the flock he guides. **R/.**

Oh, that today you would hear his voice: / “Harden not your hearts as at Meribah, as in the day of Massah in the desert, /Where your fathers tempted me; they tested me though they had seen my works.” **R/.**

Second Reading Page 76

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Romans

Romans 5:1-2, 5-8

Brothers and sisters: Since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith to this grace in which we stand, and we boast in hope of the glory of God.

And hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us. For Christ, while we were still helpless, died at the appointed time for the ungodly. Indeed, only with difficulty does one die for a just person, though perhaps for a good person one might even find courage to die. But God proves his love for us in that while we were still sinners Christ died for us.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Gospel Page 78

John 4:5-42

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John

Glory to you, O Lord

Jesus came to a town of Samaria called Sychar, near the plot of land that Jacob had given to his son Joseph. Jacob’s well was there. Jesus, tired from his journey, sat down there at the well. It was about noon.

A woman of Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, “Give me a drink.” His disciples had gone into the town to buy food. The Samaritan woman said to him, “How can you, a Jew, ask me, a Samaritan woman, for a drink?” – For Jews use nothing in common with Samaritans. – Jesus answered and said to her, “If you knew the gift of God and who is saying to you, ‘Give me a drink,’ you would have asked him and he would have given you living water.” The woman said to him, “Sir, you do not even have a bucket and the cistern is deep; where then can you get this living water? Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us this cistern and drank from it himself with his children and his flocks?” Jesus answered and said to her, “Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again; but whoever drinks the water I shall give will never thirst; the water I shall give will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.” The woman said to him, “Sir, give me this water, so that I may not be thirsty or have to keep coming here to draw water.”

Jesus said to her, “Go call your husband and come back.” The woman answered and said to him, “I do not have a husband.” Jesus answered her, “You are right in saying, ‘I do not have a husband.’ For you have had five husbands,

and the one you have now is not your husband. What you have said is true.” The woman said to him, “Sir, I can see that you are a prophet. Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain; but you people say that the place to worship is in Jerusalem.” Jesus said to her, “Believe me, woman, the hour is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. You people worship what you do not understand; we worship what we understand, because salvation is from the Jews. But the hour is coming, and is now here, when true worshipers will worship the Father in Spirit and truth; and indeed the Father seeks such people to worship him. God is Spirit, and those who worship him must worship in Spirit and truth.” The woman said to him, “I know that the Messiah is coming, the one called the Christ; when he comes, he will tell us everything.” Jesus said to her, “I am he, the one speaking with you.”

At that moment his disciples returned, and were amazed that he was talking with a woman, but still no one said, “What are you looking for?” or “Why are you talking with her?” The woman left her water jar and went into the town and said to the people, “come see a man who told me everything I have done. Could he possibly be the Christ?” They went out of the town and came to him. Meanwhile, the disciples urged him, “Rabbi, eat.” But he said to them, “I have food to eat of which you do not know.” So the disciples said to one another, “Could someone have brought him something to eat?” Jesus said to them, “My food is to do the will of the one who sent me and to finish his work. Do you not say, ‘In four months the harvest will be here? I tell you, look up and see the fields ripe for the eternal life, so that the sower and reaper can rejoice together. For here the saying is verified that ‘One sows and another reaps.’ I sent you to reap what you have not worked for; others have done the work, and you are sharing the fruits of their work.”

Many of the Samaritans of that town began to believe in him [because of the word of the woman who testified, “He told me everything I have done.” When the Samaritans came to him, they invited him to stay with them; and he stayed there two days. Many more began to believe in him because of his work, and they said to the woman, “We no longer believe because of your word; for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is truly the savior of the world.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Reflection on the Word:

Water is necessary for life. It is so essential that scientists search for its presence on other planets to determine whether they can support life. The Israelites were desperate for it when wandering in the desert. The well in Sychar had supplied water to residents going back to Jacob. This source of water had sustained life for generations. But Jesus raises the stakes on the woman at the well. His source of water sustains life eternally.

Repeatedly Pope Francis has stressed the missionary character of the Church. The woman at the well typifies this character. She encounters Jesus, has a transformative experience, then drops everything to go tell her friends and neighbors. Her testimony bears fruit, as it leads them to go out, find Jesus, and convince him to stay. They begin to believe, but after hearing for themselves, they become convinced. Like living water, her faith in Jesus flows out from her to transform those around her.

In the passage from Exodus, God would have every right to punish the people. They were openly revolting against Moses, complaining that they were worse off than when they were enslaved. Instead, God gave them the water they needed to survive in the desert. Similarly, Jesus could have condemned the woman for repeatedly divorcing her husbands and now living with a sixth man outside marriage. Instead, he offers her living water. Neither the woman nor the Israelites deserved the life-giving water they were given. Nor did we do anything to deserve the life-giving waters of baptism. But, to paraphrase Paul, God gave us the waters of salvation while we were still sinners.

Question - What do I thirst for spiritually? Can I find sustenance in the life-giving water I have received? How can I share this living water with those around me?

Prayer of the Faithful:

We know that the Lord is in our midst and so we turn now to God to pray for the needs of the world.

- For the Church, that we can be a source of life-giving water to all those who thirst, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**
- That the precious resource of water may be shared equitably by all, especially by those who have it in abundance with those who suffer from drought, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**
- For the elect who are preparing for their initiation into the body of Christ, that the living water Jesus gives may well up and overflow in them, a spring for eternal life, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**
- For all who thirst for peace in the world, justice in our nation, and reconciliation in our communities, that they may find sustenance in the living water Jesus entrusts to our care, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**
- For those who have hardened their hearts and have lost hope, that they may realize the love of God that has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

For what else should we pray? _____ let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

- For all the prayers that we hold in the silence of our hearts; for all our intentions spoken and unspoken, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, hear our prayer.**

Generous God, you provided water for those who called on you in the desert. You sent your Son, who promised water that would always satisfy our thirst. Hear the prayers we offer and quench our thirst for your life-giving water. We make this and all our prayers through Christ our Lord.

Communion RiteThe Lord's Prayer: Page 152

Let us pray with confidence to the Father in the words our Savior gave us.

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

Rite of Peace:

The sign of peace outwardly expresses a deep spiritual reality; through this sign we acknowledge Christ's presence in each other and share the peace we have received from Him. Let us offer each other the sign of peace.

Let us offer each other the sign of peace.

Communion:

Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who takes away the sins of the world. Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.

The body of Christ. **Amen.**

Prayer after Communion:

As we receive the pledge of things yet hidden in heaven and are nourished while still on earth with the Bread that comes from on high, we humbly entreat you, O Lord, we humbly entreat you, O Lord, that what is being brought about in us in mystery may come to true completion.

Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

*Concluding Rite:**Final Blessing:*

May the Lord bless us,  protect us from all evil and bring us to everlasting life. **Amen.**

Go in the peace of Christ! **Thanks be to God.**