March 8, 2026 – Third Sunday in Lent

First Reading: Exodus 17: 1-7

In Exodus 12 the Lord delivers the Israelites from Egypt. In Exodus 14 He provides a way through the Red Sea and drowns the Egyptian army. In Exodus 15: 20-21 Miriam, sister of Moses and Aaron, leads the women in praising and giving thanks to God.

But only three days later – in Exodus 15: 23-24 – the Israelites cannot drink the water at Marah because it was bitter and so they complained.
In Exodus 16: 2-3 in the Wilderness of Sin the whole congregation complained. "You have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger." And so God provided quail and manna.

Exodus 17: 1-3 - From the wilderness of Sin they journeyed by stages, as the LORD commanded. They camped at Rephidim, but there was no water for the people to drink. The people complained against Moses and said, "Why did you bring us out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and livestock with thirst?"

How often does God have to put up with our complaints?
How often do we complain vs. how often do we sing praises and give thanks?
Because of all the ways in which God blesses, should we not thank and praise Him at least as much and as often as we complain?

4 - So Moses cried out to the LORD, "What shall I do with this people? They are almost ready to stone me."

Have you ever cried out to God, "What shall/can I do with/about this situation?

5-6 - The LORD said to Moses, "Go on ahead of the people, and take some of the elders of Israel with you; take in your hand the staff with which you struck the Nile and go. I will be standing there in front of you on the rock at Horeb. Strike the rock, and water will come out of it, so that the people may drink." Moses did so, in the sight of the elders of Israel.
7 - He called the place Massah and Meribah, because the Israelites quarreled and tested the LORD, saying, "Is the LORD among us or not?"

When have you needed God to stand in front of you?
When have you wondered whether the Lord was with you or not?

Psalm: Psalm 95

8 - Harden not your hearts, as at Meribah, as on that day at Massah in the desert.
9 - There your ancestors tested me, they put me to the test, though they had seen my works.

When have we tested God and put Him to the test, though we have seen His works?

Second Reading: Romans 5: 1-11

1-2 - Since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand.

2-5 - We boast in our hope of sharing the glory of God. We also boast in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us.

6 - While we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly.
8 - God proves his love for us in that while we still were sinners Christ died for us.
10 - While we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son.

What kind of people did Jesus die for?
Not those who through their own efforts had made themselves into good people, but the weak, sinners, and those who were hostile to God.

Gospel: John 4: 5-42

3-4 – Jesus left Judea and started back to Galilee. But he had to go through Samaria.

5-6 – He came to a Samaritan city called Sychar, near the plot of ground that Jacob had given to his son Joseph. Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired out by his journey, was sitting by the well. It was about noon.

7, 9 - A Samaritan woman came to draw water, and Jesus said to her, "Give me a drink." The Samaritan woman said to him, "How is it that you, a Jew, ask a drink of me, a woman of Samaria?" (Jews do not share things in common with Samaritans.)

10 - Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, 'Give me a drink,' you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water."

16-20 - Jesus said to her, "Go, call your husband, and come back." The woman answered him, "I have no husband." Jesus said to her, "You are right in saying, 'I have no husband'; for you have had five husbands, and the one you have now is not your husband." The woman said to him, "Sir, I see that you are a prophet. Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain, but you say that the place where people must worship is in Jerusalem."

21, 23 - Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. The hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father seeks such as these to worship him."

25-26 - The woman said to him, "I know that Messiah is coming" (who is called Christ). When he comes, he will proclaim all things to us." Jesus said to her, "I am he, the one who is speaking to you."

28-30 - The woman left her water jar and went back to the city. She said to the people, "Come and see a man who told me everything I have ever done! He cannot be the Messiah, can he?" They left the city and were on their way to him.

35 – Jesus said to his disciples, "Look around you, and see how the fields are ripe for harvesting."

39-42 - Many Samaritans from that city believed in him because of the woman's testimony, "He told me everything I have ever done." So when the Samaritans came to him, they asked him to stay with them; and he stayed there two days. And many more believed because of his word. They said to the woman, "It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is truly the Savior of the world."