

Please pray for:

Bishop Steve and Lorraine, Ministry Educator Michael Godfrey, CYF Educator - John Graveston, Community Support Enabler - Anne Van Gend, the Diocesan office staff and Council.

Those affected by the devastation of Cyclone Gabrielle.

Syria and Turkey in the aftermath of the earthquakes.

Those who are sick: Alaric & Celine, Anne, Anne G, Baby Wanrooy, Bev, Bill, Chris, Cruz and Mason, Dorothy H, Gerald, Jean V, Jim & Eleanor L, Joan F, Jenny M, Mike, Muriel and family, Lysiane, Myrtle, Louise, Marilyn, Margaret, Nick D, Pat C, Philip, Rex & Rachel, Sarah, Sharron M, Shirley M, Ruby, Val S.

Southern Coastal Deanery

12th March, 2023

3rd Sunday in Lent

This week's readings centre on God's faithfulness as the source of life, and on our human need to trust that God provides. As we listen to quarrels with God by thirsty travellers in the wilderness and to the big questions asked at the well, we find the courage to use our voice to say what matters most and to claim resurrection for ourselves. The theme of life-giving water runs through these readings, while the reading from Romans speaks of God's grace as the source of life.

Exodus 17:1–7 The Israelites are in the desert and angry because they cannot see how Moses can provide them with the essential water they need. They quarrel with Moses and ask the big question, "Why did you bring us here anyway?" Moses turns to God, asks God for help, and God gives directions for Moses to strike the rock at Horeb. God's immediate response acts out the relationship of trust and faithfulness that the Israelites lacked.

In Romans 5:1–11, Paul explains what it means to be justified by faith: we are restored to a right relationship with God through Christ. This brings us peace. Even our suffering can teach us endurance, build character, and lead to hope. Christ's life leads us into life with God.

John 4:5–42 This long reading is dominated by the conversation between Jesus and a Samaritan woman he meets at the well. The comparison with last week's gospel story is striking. Both readings depict a character struggling to understand Jesus' talk about spiritual things. But this woman is everything Nicodemus was not – a woman with no voice or standing, a despised Samaritan, morally suspect, and isolated from her community. Why else would she be alone at a well at the hottest time of the day? This is a story about how her voice changed a community. Yet her community has shunned her. She is alone rather than with the safety of others, seeking water in the most dangerous part of the day. She is in the wilderness even though she is familiar with the terrain.

Jesus broke Jewish custom to engage her in conversation. The woman

Green Island - Brighton, Mornington, St Kilda

Worship Schedule

Brighton 10.30a.m. 1st and 3rd Sundays

Green Island 10.30a.m. 2nd & 4th Sundays

Mornington 9.30am

**Except for the 3rd Sunday when we have 4pm Soup & Communion
St Kilda 11a.m. (Morning tea served from 10.15a.m.)**

Midweek service

Wednesday @ 1pm at Holy Cross

Southern Coastal Deanery

St Margaret's 4 Seaview Road, Brighton - St Mark's 27 Shand St, GI

St Mary's 3 Whitby St, Mornington

Holy Cross 5 Bellona St. St Kilda

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was interested, initially confused and defensive, but, unlike Nicodemus, she felt she had nothing to lose by engaging with Jesus. Perhaps it was this fact that allowed her finally to “see” past her physical needs to the spiritual truths that Jesus was teaching her. While the woman needs physical water for her body, it is the spiritual water, the living water of Jesus, that gives her a voice others will hear.

In verse 49, the woman asks a bold question of her community, “He cannot be the Messiah, can he?” She testifies to her community that “he told me everything I have ever done” and uses her voice to tell the truth about her encounter. There is a realization that her voice can effect change. The candour with which this woman had an open and honest conversation with Jesus leads to change. We may imagine her ostracized and invisible as she approaches the well alone. Her assertions in verse 29 led her community to believe her about Jesus, enough that they dropped what they were doing to go find him. Her voice was the impetus for their invitation for Jesus to stay in town and reach more people. The woman asked big and hard questions and spoke about what mattered most, and it made a difference in her community.

We can use our voices to quarrel with God, to ask big questions, and to speak the truth. We can use our voices to change our communities and praise God. As we thirst for new life, we find refreshment in the water offered by God in the desert places.

Call to worship

Come into the wildness of possibility where strangers meet, and everything changes in one conversation. Come away from all that you thought you knew and find your voice.

We have so much to say, so much has gone unsaid.

Come into the wildness and find others that are eager and ready to speak with you and hear your truth. **We come to tell the truth.**

Opening Prayer

In the driest desert, O God, you provided a rock that held a fountain for those who thirst. Come, gracious God, and fill us with your love. In a place of quarrelling, you provide an answer that holds life for those who hope. Come, gracious God, and fill us with your love. In a place of wonder, you provided living water, for those who met there. Come, gracious God, and fill us with your love. **Amen.**

Sentence: The water that I will give, says the Lord, will become in you a spring of water welling up to eternal life.’ *John 4:14*

Collect: Give us grace and courage to hope, and to risk disappointment. Teach us to pray expectantly, and when our prayers seem to fail, bring us to pray again and again; for you are our God, who acts, and will act again. Hear this prayer for your love’s sake. Amen.

Readings: Exod 17:1-7, Rom 5:1-11, John 4:5-42

Hymns:

HTC 451 All my hope on God is founded, HTC 342 Let all the world in every corner sing, HTC 360 Father hear the prayer we offer, HTC 583 Praise the Lord, you heavens adore him.

Readings for Sunday 19th March

1 Sam 16:1-13, Eph 5:8-14, John 9:1-41

Notices:

Six Day Silent Retreat – Jan is away on retreat, time to stop and listen to the leading of the Spirit, to go deeper with God from Sunday 12- Friday 17th March.

There will be no mid week service on Wednesday 15th March and Oasis after school programme will be on break on Tuesday 14th.

Thursday 16th March: 10.30-11.30 am Fruit & vege distribution at St Marks. 4-5.30pm Fruit & Vege distribution at Holy Cross. **7.30pm** Bible Study group at Holy Cross

Sunday 19th March: 10.30am Brighton Eucharist and Lenten Study. 11am Holy Cross Eucharist, 4pm Soup and Communion at St Mary’s

Final orders for **Hot Cross buns** are due on this week. Profits from the sale of buns are going to the Cyclone Gabrielle relief appeal.

The Southern Coastal Deanery AGM will be held on Sunday 26th March at 10.30am at Holy Cross. A pot luck lunch will follow. Please email reports to Jan Clark by Friday 17th March.