

## Children's liturgy – Third Sunday of Lent (Year A)

### Preparing the worship space

Colour: purple

**Song suggestions:** O Lord all the world belongs to you (847, Laudate)

**Welcome:** Today we hear a story about Jesus talking to a Samaritan woman at a well. This story reminds us that God loves all people no matter where they are from. God asks us to be like Jesus and to respect and care for all people no matter who they are.

**Opening prayer:** God of peace, you care for all people in our world. Move us to do the same and to do all that we can to help others, no matter where in the world they are. Amen.

**First reading (optional):** Exodus 17:3-7

**Psalm (optional):** Ps 94:1-2, 6-9

**Gospel acclamation:** *everyone stands and sings the acclamation together. For Lent we use an acclamation that doesn't use the word 'Alleluia'.*

**Gospel:** John 4:5-42 or John 4:5-15, 19-26, 39-42. *Below is the shortened version.*

In Samaria he came to a town named Sychar, which was not far from the field that Jacob had given to his son Joseph. Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired out by the journey, sat down by the well. It was about noon.

A Samaritan woman came to draw some water, and Jesus said to her, "Give me a drink of water." (His disciples had gone into town to buy food.)

The woman answered, "You are a Jew, and I am a Samaritan — so how can you ask me for a drink?" (Jews will not use the same cups and bowls that Samaritans use.)

Jesus answered, "If only you knew what God gives and who it is that is asking you for a drink, you would ask him, and he would give you life-giving water."

"Sir," the woman said, "you haven't got a bucket, and the well is deep. Where would you get that life-giving water? It was our ancestor Jacob who gave us this well; he and his sons and his flocks all drank from it. You don't claim to be greater than Jacob, do you?"

Jesus answered, "All those who drink this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again. The water that I will give him will become in him a spring which will provide him with life-giving water and give him eternal life."

"Sir," the woman said, "give me that water! Then I will never be thirsty again, nor will I have to come here to draw water."

"I see you are a prophet, sir," the woman said. "My Samaritan ancestors worshipped God on this mountain, but you Jews say that Jerusalem is the place where we should worship God."

Jesus said to her, "Believe me, woman, the time will come when people will not worship the Father either on this mountain or in Jerusalem. You Samaritans do not really know whom you worship; but we Jews know whom we worship, because it is from the Jews that salvation comes. But the time is coming and is already here, when by the power of God's Spirit people will worship the Father as he really is, offering him the true worship that he wants. God is Spirit, and only by the power of his Spirit can people worship him as he really is."

The woman said to him, "I know that the Messiah will come, and when he comes, he will tell us everything."

Jesus answered, "I am he, I who am talking with you."

Many of the Samaritans in that town believed in Jesus because the woman had said, "He told me everything I have ever done." So when the Samaritans came to him, they begged him to stay with them, and Jesus stayed there two days.

Many more believed because of his message, and they said to the woman, "We believe now, not because of what you said, but because we ourselves have heard him, and we know that he really is the Saviour of the world."

*(Gospel passage taken from Good News Translation® and used with permission, see details below\*)*

**Gospel reflection:** What do you remember from the reading you have just heard?

Jesus is thirsty and so he asks a Samaritan woman for a drink from the well.

The woman is surprised because normally Jews and Samaritans did not get along. It was also unusual at the time for a man to talk to a woman he did not know.

But even though it is unusual, Jesus talks to the woman anyway. Why do you think he does this?

Jesus is showing us that God loves everyone. No matter who they are, where they come from or the colour of their skin – man or woman, boy or girl, rich or poor.

Even though we are all different, we still need the same things to live. Can you think of what those things might be?

Just like Jesus in this story we all need water to drink. We need food to eat. A safe place to live, somewhere to learn and someone to look after us when we are sick.

Jesus shows the woman that he is Christ, the Son of God, by knowing all about her life even though he has never met her before.

How do you think this makes the woman feel?

God also knows everything there is to know about us. And God loves us. How does this make you feel?

Sometimes people forget that God loves us all and that we are part of one global family. They only see the differences between themselves and another group of people. This can lead to many problems.

What problems might we have when we only look at what's different between ourselves and someone else?

It can lead to people not being very nice to each other. Which can also mean that there are arguments and fighting.

Do you think this is how God wants us to treat each other? What do you think God wants us to do?

God asks us to love and care for all people no matter who they are because we are all part of one global family. To help each other when things are difficult and to work together to make the world a better place for everyone to live in.

So this week let's do what we can to help other people. Let's treat those who are different to us with kindness and respect. Let's share with others and try to live in peace.

What will you do this week to show that you care for others?

**Intercessions** *You may want to ask the children to offer their own prayers or you can use the suggestions below.*

Jesus shows us that we should treat all people kindly, even if they are different to us. And so we ask for God's help as we pray:

We pray for the Church around the world: that she may follow Jesus' example and be welcoming to all, reaching out especially to those who are poor. Lord, hear us...

We pray for people who are treated badly because they are different: that they may find comfort in God's love for all people. Lord, hear us...

We pray for our parish, families and friends: that knowing we are all children of God we may respect and care for all people around the world and encourage others to do the same. Lord, hear us...

**Closing prayer:** Caring God, fill our hearts with love for all your people. Move us to treat all people with kindness and respect and to work to make the world a better place for everyone to live in. Amen.

## Activity suggestions

Share the accompanying activity sheet with the children. Invite them to colour the illustration and to see if they can spot all the things in the picture that we all need to live, no matter where we are in the world. Encourage them to do the other activities on the sheet either now or at home later.

One thing that makes us different from others and which can lead to us not understanding them is the language that we speak. Check with the children if any of them speak another language at home. Invite them to share how to say hello in that language and get all the children to repeat it. Why not share these other examples:

Kiswahili: Jambo (*jam-boh*)  
Spanish: Hola (*oh-lah*)  
French: Bonjour (*bon-zhoor*)  
Mandarin: Ni hao (*nee-haow*)

Japanese: Konichiwa (*kon-nee-chee-wah*)  
Hindi: Namaste (*Nah-may-stay*)  
Arabic: Salaam a' alaykum (*sal-ahm al-ay-kum*)

Encourage the children to draw a picture of themselves in the middle of a piece of paper and to write five things about themselves eg. My name is...

I am ... years old. My eyes are ... (colour). My hair is ... (colour). I like ...

Get the children to share what they have written so that they can see how different yet how similar they all are. Remind them that the differences between us are a good thing. How boring it would be if we were all the same!

Remind the children to tell their grown ups about what they have heard and thought about in the liturgy today. Invite them to think about how they treat other people this week and to remember that God wants us to care for everyone, even if they are different. Remind them to do at least one thing this week to show how they care for others.

Find more Lent resources to share with the children at [cafod.org.uk/primarylent](http://cafod.org.uk/primarylent)

\*Gospel passage taken from:

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For more children's liturgy resources and illustrations see [cafod.org.uk/childrensliturgy](http://cafod.org.uk/childrensliturgy)

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