

Coloma Catholic Life.

Liturgical Year

3rd Week in Lent. Liturgical colour – Purple

Pope Francis' Prayer Intention for March Catholics in China

We pray that the Church in China may persevere in its faithfulness to the Gospel and grow in unity.

Video link: <https://www.vaticannews.va/en/pope/news/2020-03/pope-francis-prayer-intention-march-2020.html>

Pope Francis Tweet

"Let us pray for the grace to cultivate a desire for Christ, source of living water, the only one who can satisfy the thirst for life and love which we bear in our hearts."

Gospel reflection for Sunday 15th March: John 4: 5 - 42



On this Sunday and the next two Sundays, there is a 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 the three-year liturgical cycle. In Sunday's Gospel, the dialogue between Jesus and a woman from Samaria is among the lengthiest 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.

The initial conversation between Jesus and the woman is better understood when considering 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.

"O that today you would listen to his voice, harden not your hearts"



Upcoming Events

17th March – Periods 5 & 6
Reconciliation for Year 9

24th March – Periods 5 & 6
Reconciliation for Year 10

1st April - Periods 5 & 6
Reconciliation for Year 11

Years 12 & 13 are warmly invited to attend any of the above to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

10th April - Good Friday

The timing of her visit is a clear sign that she is an outcast within the Samaritan community. From her conversation with Jesus it is clear 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.

Funeral Arrangements for The Most Reverend Peter Smith Emeritus Archbishop of Southwark

Details of Archbishop Peter's funeral as announced by the Diocese on their website.

Following the death of our beloved Archbishop Emeritus Peter Smith, funeral arrangements have been organised as follows: The Reception of the Body and Requiem Mass will both take place at St George's Cathedral, Southwark.

Sunday 29th March:

6 pm: Reception into St George's Cathedral followed by Cathedral Mass: Archbishop John Wilson to preside.

8 pm: Vigil Service, after which the Cathedral will close.

Monday 30th March:

7 am: Cathedral opens.

7.30 am: Cathedral Mass.

12.30 pm: Funeral Mass: Archbishop John Wilson to preside. Burial in the Cathedral Crypt at the end of the Mass.

All are welcome to join us in order to pray for the repose of the soul of Archbishop Peter Smith and to pray for his family.

May he rest in peace.

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Rededication of England as the Dowry of Mary



England will be re-dedicated as the Dowry of Mary on Sunday March 29th. It is a personal promise of the people of our country and a renewal of the entrustment vows made by King Richard II in 1381. It was in Westminster Abbey that King Richard II sought the protection of Our Lady. England received the title 'Mary's Dowry' which means that England was 'set aside' as a gift, a dowry, for Our Lady under her guidance and protection. By this re-dedication we are invited to give ourselves to Mary. By making a personal promise and a communal entrustment.

Our personal promise brings us closer to Mary, the first disciple of Christ. In this we unite in her joy by following her openness to God's call. Our personal promise is expressed through the Angelus. This is a prayer of commitment in which we proclaim our own 'Yes' to the will of God in union with Mary. The following link takes you to the Angelus Promise:

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5dd26c39e4888e54689c5a3f/t/5e1681cf89782e64aa50fed6/1578533328341/Angelus+Promise.pdf>

Our communal entrustment unites us together as the people of our country in prayer, by renewing the vows of dedication made by Mary to our ancestors. This Act of Entrustment of England to the Virgin Mary is a prayer of profoundly historic and spiritual nature. It brings together the prayers of surrender and dedication that have echoed throughout our history. The following links takes you to the Act of Entrustment:

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5dd26c39e4888e54689c5a3f/t/5e1681de41d1895d960a582e/1578533343593/Act+of+Entrustment.pdf>

In preparation for this we are called to pray a Novena of prayer every day:

<https://www.behold2020.com/prayer>

The timeline leading up to the 29th March:

On Wednesday 25th March the Feast of the Annunciation all are invited to consecrate themselves to Jesus through Mary.

From Thursday 26th March to Saturday 28th March there is a three-day triduum of prayer in which all are invited to recite the litany of Saints and Martyrs of England, pray the Rosary and go to Confession in preparation for the rededication.

On Sunday 29th March: a personal rededication of England as the Dowry of Mary will take place in every Catholic Cathedral and parish and in as many homes as possible in England. It is a personal rededication.

Decree from Archbishop John Wilson

On March 9th Archbishop John issued a decree on the mandatory requirements for parishes and schools. It outlines necessary changes recently updated to Mass and liturgies within the Diocese due to the COVID-19 virus. This information is to be shared with all members of the community who are responsible for organising, planning, leading and attending liturgical events. Coloma has commissioned Eucharistic Ministers who must also adhere to the advice given. This Decree should be followed alongside all advice given by Public Health England.

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In summary:

- The 'sign of peace' is to be omitted at masses.
- Distribution of Holy Communion from the chalice will cease.
- Holy Communion on the tongue is discouraged.
- Holy water stoups to be emptied.
- Shared hymn books and Mass books should not be used. Single-use mass sheets may be used and disposed of after use.

Below is a link to specific prayers during a time of 'flu and illness.

<https://www.cbcew.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2020/03/prayer-flu-viruses.pdf>

Sacrament of Reconciliation

During Lent all girls will have the opportunity to receive absolution in sacramental confession. This week we welcome to Coloma Fr Roy, from St Columba's, Selsdon and Fr Keith/Jackson from Our lady's, Addiscombe. They will be available in the Chapel for girls in **Year 9** on Tuesday 17th March from 1:10 – 2:50pm. Any girl wishing to take this opportunity must collect a ticket from her Form Tutor with a specific time to go to the Chapel to receive the sacrament.

18th March Spring/Vernal Equinox



Spring Equinox celebrates the renewed life of the Earth that comes with the Spring. It is a solar festival, celebrated when the length of the day and the night are equal (this happens twice a year, at Spring and Autumn Equinox).

This turn in the seasons has been celebrated by cultures throughout history who held festivals for their gods and goddesses at this time of year. Aphrodite from Cyprus, Hathor from Egypt and Ostara of Scandinavia. The Celts continued the tradition with festivities at this time of year.

Today, Pagans continue to celebrate the coming of Spring. They attribute the changes that are going on in the world to an increase in the powers of their God and Goddess (the personifications of the great force that is at work in the world). At the time of Spring Equinox the God and the Goddess are often portrayed as The Green Man and Mother Earth. The Green Man is said to be born of Mother Earth in the depths of winter and to live through the rest of the year until he dies at Samhain.

To celebrate Spring Equinox some Pagans carry out particular rituals. For instance a woman and a man are chosen to act out the roles of Spring God and Goddess, playing out courtship and symbolically planting seeds. Egg races, egg hunts, egg eating and egg painting are also traditional activities at this time of year.

22nd March Mothering Sunday (Simmel Sunday)

Mothering Sunday is the fourth Sunday of Lent. Traditionally, it was a day when children, mainly daughters, who had gone to work as domestic servants were given a day off to visit their mother

and family. Today it is a day when children give presents, flowers, and home-made cards to their mothers.

Most Sundays in the year churchgoers in England worship at their nearest parish or 'daughter church'. Centuries ago, it was considered important for people to return to their home or 'mother' church once a year. So, each year in the middle of Lent, everyone would visit their 'mother' church - the main church or cathedral of the area. Inevitably the return to the 'mother' church became an occasion for family reunions when children who were working away returned home. It was quite common in those days for children to leave home for work once they were ten years old.

Most historians think that it was the return to the 'Mother' church which led to the tradition of children, particularly those working as domestic servants, or as apprentices, being given the day off to visit their mother and family. As they walked along the country lanes, children would pick wild flowers or violets to take to church or give to their mother as a small gift.

Mothering Sunday was also known as Refreshment Sunday because the fasting rules for Lent were relaxed that day. Originally, both Old and New Testament lessons on mid-lent Sunday made a point of food.



Simnel cake

The food item specially associated with Mothering Sunday is the Simnel cake. A Simnel cake is a fruit cake with two layers of almond paste, one on top and one in the middle. The cake is made with 11 balls of marzipan icing on top representing the 11 disciples. (Judas is not included.) Traditionally, sugar violets would also be added.

Why Simnel?

The name Simnel probably comes from the Latin word *simila* which means a fine wheat flour usually used for baking a cake. There's a legend that a man called Simon and his wife Nell argued over whether the cake for Mothering Sunday should be baked or boiled. In the end they did both, so the cake was named after both of them: SIM-NELL.

Saints of the Week

17th March - St Patrick, Bishop and Missionary



Patrick was born in Roman Britain and at the age of fourteen he was captured by Irish pirates and taken to Ireland as a slave where he became a shepherd. At the time Ireland was a land of paganism ruled by Druids. Patrick turned to God and in his 'Confessions' he wrote: 'The love of God and his fear grew in me more and more, as did the faith, and my soul was rosed, so that, in a single day, I have said as many as a hundred prayers and in the night, nearly the same. I prayed in the woods and on the mountain, even before dawn. I felt no hurt from the snow or ice or rain.'" At the age of 20 he escaped to the coast where he boarded a ship and returned to his family in England.

He was prompted by a vision to study for the priesthood and was ordained by St Germanus, Bishop of Auxerre. After being ordained a bishop he travelled to Ireland arriving in Slane on March

25th 433. Patrick preached the Gospel throughout Ireland and many were converted to the Christian faith. He built many churches across the country and would use the shamrock to explain the mystery of the Holy Trinity. Bishop Patrick continued to evangelise in Ireland for the next 40 years and died at Saul, where he had built the first Church in Ireland, in 461. St Patrick's most well-known prayer is known as St Patrick's Breastplate: Christ be within me, Christ behind me, Christ before me, Christ beside me, Christ to win me, Christ to comfort and restore me, Christ beneath me, Christ above me, Christ inquired, Christ in danger, Christ in hearts of all that love me, Christ in mouth of friend and stranger."

Ireland is not the only country where St Patrick is a patron saint. In 1961, the same year Ireland opened an embassy in Lagos, Irish bishops named St Patrick the patron saint of Nigeria. The Irish have a long history in the country. In the 1890s, Roger Casement, who was executed in Dublin 1916 for his role in the Easter Rising, served as a British consular officer in Calabar, in south eastern Nigeria. In the 1920s, Irish priests of the Order of the Holy Ghost set up a mission in the country. St. Patrick's Society for Foreign Missions, dedicated on March 17, 1932, became one of several Catholic groups in Nigeria providing both religious and secular education.

Today, there are around 20 million Catholics in the country, and Nigerian priests have even recently been assigned to churches in England and Ireland, where the clergy is in decline.

Wednesday 18th March - Commemoration of St Cyril of Jerusalem, Bishop and Doctor

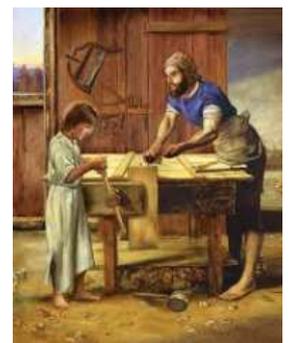


Saint Cyril of Jerusalem was raised in Jerusalem and well-educated, especially in the Scriptures. He was ordained a priest by the bishop of Jerusalem and given the task during Lent of catechizing those preparing for Baptism and catechizing the newly baptized during the Easter season. His *Catecheses* remain valuable as examples of the ritual and theology of the Church in the mid-fourth century. At the time the Church was embroiled in the controversy caused by Arianism, the teaching that denied the Divinity of Christ and saw Jesus as created by the Father and was therefore neither co-eternal nor consubstantial with the Father. After being ordained a Bishop Cyril faced challenges from the Arians and was driven

from Jerusalem on two occasions, eventually spending half of his episcopate away from his diocese. It was at the Council of Constantinople that the amended form of the Nicene Creed was promulgated in 381, to state that Jesus was 'consubstantial with the Faith' meaning that Christ is of the same substance or nature as the Father. Cyril was declared a Doctor of the Church by Pope Leo XIII in 1883.

Thursday 19th March - St Joseph, Husband of Mary

Little is known about the life of St Joseph outside of what we know from the Gospels. In the Gospels we meet a man, a devout Jew, who is faced with a massive challenge when he learns that his young wife, Mary, is expecting a child that is not his own. In Jewish society this would be regarded as adultery and the guilty person would be condemned to be stoned to death. Joseph loves Mary and does not want this to be her fate, so he resolves to send her away quietly. It is then that a vision shows Joseph the way forward: "But as he considered this, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit; she will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins". When Joseph woke from



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sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him. *“Mt 1:16 – 24. Joseph says, ‘Yes’ to the will of God, and he trusts totally that God will guide and be with him though out his life as husband of Mary and as the earthly father of Jesus, the Son of God.*

Joseph is also patron saint of the Universal Church, families, fathers, expectant mothers (pregnant women), travellers, immigrants, house sellers and buyers, craftsmen, engineers, and working people in general.

