



# NEWSLETTER

12<sup>TH</sup> MARCH. 3<sup>RD</sup> SUNDAY OF LENT.

A PARISH OF THE MULLINGAR DEANERY

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Streaming; <https://www.churchservices.tv/raharney>

[www.parishofkillucan.ie](http://www.parishofkillucan.ie) Facebook: Killucan Parish

*The Community of St. Camillus 044 9374115.*

## ST. JOSEPH'S, RATHWIRE.

Saturday 11<sup>th</sup>, 6pm. Robert & Noel Kellaghan.

Sunday 12<sup>th</sup>, 11.30am. Paddy, Peg, Thomas Beatty & members of the Packenham family. Sally & Tommy O'Hara.

Fri 17<sup>th</sup>, 11.30am. Billy Farrell.


Sunday 19<sup>th</sup>, 11.30am. Seamus, David, Willie & Eileen Leech.

## ST. BRIGID'S, RAHARNEY.

Sunday 12<sup>th</sup>, 10am. Brendan Sheils.

Sunday 19<sup>th</sup>, 10am. Mick, Mary & Valarie Murtagh.

**Weekday Masses;** Tuesday, Wed, Thursday at 9am in Raharney.

 <p>Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament</p>	<p><b>In St. Joseph's Tuesday 1pm-9pm. &amp; St. Brigid's Wed. 5pm-10pm:</b> <i>Special Diocesan intention of prayer for vocations and the family.</i> <b>Take one Hour with the Lord</b></p>
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<b>MASS OFFERTORY COLLECTION: €495</b> <b>PARISH DEVELOPMENT FUND €540</b>	RIP: Patsy Flanagan, Raharney. Kit Connolly, Hill of Down. Nancy McKeogh.
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**St. Patrick's Day:** Mass at 10am in Raharney and 11.30am in Rathwire.

**Adoration:** this Tuesday in Raharney.

**Thank you:** for the donations to the special collection last weekend. €2335 was donated.

**Stations of the Cross:** prayer at the stations on each Thursdsay of Lent in Raharney at 7pm.

**Cemetery Sunday:** takes place on June 18<sup>th</sup>.

**Killucan/ Raharney CCE:** traditional music session on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> at 8.30pm in Ennis' lounge.

## Softening the Heart

In today's Gospel, Jesus promises the Samaritan woman "living water which shall become a fountain within her, leaping up to provide eternal life." The liturgy on this Lenten Sunday places Jesus' promise within the context of the Exodus account of water coming from the rock of Horeb.

The Responsorial Psalms 95 refers both to the "Rock of our salvation" and also to hardened hearts. On the one hand, there is the Rock from which the water of eternal life flows (God). On the other hand, there are rocks (our hearts) which we seek to soften in Lent by "prayer, fasting and works of mercy."

We believe, with Paul, that "the love of God has been poured out in our hearts through the Holy Spirit." That love of God should make us a forgiving people, one that enables the world to "be brought together in unity and peace."

Our goal is to "harden not our hearts:" to be concerned for the poor and suffering, to forgive the criminal, to welcome the stranger, to love our enemies.

"If only you recognized God's gift. ..."

By becoming for people a model of merciful love for others, Christ proclaims by his actions even more than by his words that call to mercy which is one of the essential elements of the gospel ethos.

In this instance it is not just a case of fulfilling a commandment or an obligation of an ethical nature: it is also a case of satisfying a condition of major importance for God to reveal himself in his mercy to man:

"The merciful ... shall obtain mercy."

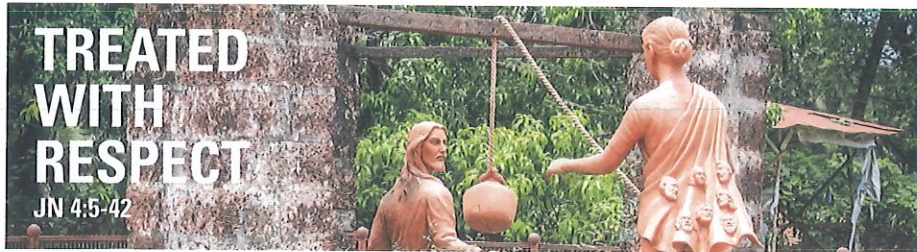
Pope John Paul II, *Dives in Misericordia*,

# Sunday Message

THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT

## THE WORD

Year A • 12 March 2023 • Colour: Violet • Psalter Week 3



In today's Gospel, Jesus meets an unaccompanied Samaritan woman in Samaria. Everyone knows that Jews and Samaritans don't associate with one another. Unmarried men and women don't associate with one another either, at least not unsupervised.

Jesus is tired from travelling and needs a drink. The Samaritan woman comes to the well at the hottest time of the day so as not to be bothered by anyone else. She has a checkered past, to say the least.

Jesus does the unthinkable. He speaks to her. He is aware of her past but doesn't let it get in the way. He looks at her and sees the good in her. He doesn't see her as different or unworthy, or inferior.

He asks her to give him a drink. She replies, "How can you, a Jew, ask me, a Samaritan woman, for a drink?" She is astonished that he would speak to her, of all people.

Then they start to talk about religion, and Jesus reveals himself as the Messiah. Rather than dismiss his claim, the woman returns to her people to tell them about Jesus. She bears witness to Jesus. This outcast of a woman brings people to faith. She becomes a true disciple.

All because Jesus treated her with love and respect. Just like he treated every woman and man he encountered. ■

## DO

Look at your life. Where do you turn to find the nourishment that is truly refreshing and life-giving?

How effective an apostle are you? How eagerly do you tell people the Good News about Jesus?

## SAY

"Lord, you alone can satisfy my deepest thirst. Help me to seek all that I need in you. Amen."

## PRAY

Today's Gospel is a story of how a woman and her townspeople come to faith. Think about the gift of faith which you have received. Pray for a deepening of your faith.

## LEARN

Water is a central image of today's Gospel. It teaches us that Jesus is the living water that leads us to eternal life

God's gift of faith is given to us to be shared

## REFLECT

A lot has changed since the time of Jesus, yet a lot has remained the same. During Jesus' time, women were seen as second-class citizens, defined chiefly through their roles of wife or mother. In a male-dominated society, they lacked rights and were seen as the property of their father or husband. Though there were always exceptions, a woman's place was in the home.

This was the worldview Jesus was born into. It's also one that he challenged. Remember the group of men who were ready to stone the woman caught in adultery? Speaking against the sexual double-standard of the day, Jesus told "those without sin to cast the first stone."

Jesus recognised the dignity of women and allowed them to join his band of disciples. Think of Mary of Magdala. Going against the practice of her time, which said that only men could be disciples, Mary became a follower of Jesus, accompanying him during his ministry. When Jesus' closest male disciples hid for fear of their lives during his passion and death, she stuck with him.

Even more significant, Mary was the first person to witness the resurrected Christ. It wasn't Peter or John or any of the male disciples that Jesus appeared to. It was Mary of Magdala. It's why she's called the "Apostle to the Apostles."

Jesus' treatment of the woman in today's Gospel offers lessons for us, as individuals, as a society, and as a church. About how we treat women, about how we treat each other.

First, as individuals. Do I treat those closest to me with profound love and respect? I am a priest, a bachelor in my 60s, living in a house full of men, but I'm lucky in that both my parents lived into deep old age. And I could see how my father related to my mother, and my mother related to my father – as equal partners, soul mates, utterly dependent on each other. My mother once complained that my father had "gone to the bad" hugging her. Every time he passed her by, she said, he hugged her—a beautiful statement of love, affection, respect.

We know that domestic violence is a problem and that many people, especially women, are caught in controlling, violent

relationships, made worse by the Covid-19 lockdown. As individuals and families, how do we treat those closest to us?

As a society, greater equality exists between the sexes than in the past, but much remains to be done. The glass ceiling remains. Women continue to be objectified sexually, and internet porn has made it worse, doing tremendous damage to how young boys see women and how young women see themselves. What do we need to do to create a society where women feel safe and equal?

As a church, it is clear that much needs to be done to advance the role of women. Women comprise more than half the church's members, yet they have little say in decision-making. Imagine our church's new life and authority if women had a full and equal voice. It is one of the major issues the upcoming Synod in Rome will consider.

Jesus was extraordinarily ahead of his time. He showed, by his actions and words, that he respected and valued women, that he respected and valued everyone. So also must we. ■