

**Weekly Gospel Readings**  
**The 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of the Holy Lent**

**At the Well**  
**A Call to Submission and Repentance**

On the fourth Sunday of the Great Fast, the Church reads John 4:1-42. This Gospel recounts Jesus' encounter with the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well. What begins as a simple request for water unfolds into a life-changing conversation, as Christ reveals His identity as the Messiah. The woman, who initially came to the well burdened by shame and isolation, leaves transformed—no longer avoiding others but instead proclaiming the Good News. Her story is a powerful testament to the grace of Christ, who meets us where we are and offers us the living water of salvation.

The Samaritan woman came to the well in the hottest part of the day, where she was hoping to avoid the judgment of others due to her shameful reputation. However, she was startled to find Jesus there and even more surprised when He spoke to her. When He asked for a drink, she responded with confusion, saying, "How is it that you, a Jew, ask for a drink from me, a woman of Samaria?" ([John 4:9](#)). Her astonishment was not only because of the cultural divide between Jews and Samaritans but also because she was used to being ignored and shunned.

Christ tells 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" ([John 4:10](#)). Intrigued by this, she asks how she can receive this "living water" so that she may never thirst again. As Father Tadros Malaty explains, living water refers not just to flowing streams but, in a spiritual sense, to the Holy Spirit, who nourishes the soul and transforms its barrenness into a flourishing paradise. Jesus' words reveal that He offers more than temporary relief—He gives eternal fulfillment, inviting all to drink deeply from the well of His divine grace.

The Woman then says to Christ "Sir give me this water, that I may not thirst, nor come here to draw." ([John 4:15](#)). Jesus then tells her, "Go call your husband and come here." ([John 4:16](#)). Why would Jesus ask her to call for her husband and come back? Jesus, knowing all, already knew that she had five previous husbands and the man she was living with now was not her husband. When the woman responded to Christ telling him, "I have no husband." ([John 4:17](#)). Jesus was glad she was honest. This Samaritan woman has been living in sin. Our Lord and Savior wanted to hear her confess and repent to bring her out of sin. And so it is in our lives, although the Lord knows all of our shortcomings and sins, but we need to seek repentance and ask for the living water.

Upon realizing that the man speaking to her is the Messiah, the Samaritan woman leaves her water jar behind—just as the disciples left their nets—to follow Christ's calling. No longer weighed down by shame, she boldly becomes a witness, proclaiming the Good News to the people of Sychar. The same woman who once avoided others now eagerly shares her encounter with Jesus, leading many to believe in Him. In this encounter, we witness the transformative power of Christ's love. He gently leads the Samaritan woman to confession and repentance, guiding her into a newfound faith in Him as Lord and Savior. Her conversion then becomes a catalyst for others, as her testimony inspires the people of Sychar to turn to Christ in repentance and faith.

The story of the Samaritan woman reminds us that Christ will meet us in our brokenness and calls us to a life of transformation through repentance and faith. Just as He offered her the living water of salvation, He offers the

same to us, inviting us to leave behind our burdens and fears of judgment and embrace His grace. Her journey from shame to evangelization is a testament to the power of encountering Christ—an encounter that not only changes us but urges us to share His love with others.

As we reflect on this Sunday's Gospel, may we seek to drink deeply from the well of His mercy and salvation, pursue a life of repentance, and proclaim our Lord and Savior's truth of salvation to all who seek it.

Sources:

- Bible, English Standard Version
- Commentaries on the Gospel of St. John by Fr. Tadros Malaty
- Bible Gateway