



# Bringing Home the Word

Third Sunday of Lent (A)

March 8, 2026

## A Fountain of Life

Fr. Joseph Juknialis

The lovelorn column in the local newspaper shared a letter from someone who felt adrift. She had everything she needed or wanted — a marriage, a job, a home. Yet, she felt there had to be more to life, but she didn't know what it was or where to go. She wondered, *Could anyone help me?*

Like the woman from Samaria who happened upon Jesus when she came looking for water at the local well, she and the letter writer were both eager for "living water." The woman at the well would no longer need to come each day for her household needs, and the letter

writer would have her deeper thirsts quenched. Both wanted something more out of life, not unlike most people at one time or another.

Long before Jesus encountered the woman at the well, the people who were led by Moses through the desert grumbled to him about their thirst, which triggered Moses to grumble to God about the people. The result was finding water in the desert, the most unlikely of places. As a result, they realized that God was taking care of them and that God was ultimately their source of life.

We may decide what will bring new life — a new relationship, a new job, a new home. Yet, just as often, the answer comes from totally unexpected sources: the deserts of our lives. Also just as often, we somehow miss the answer. When we do recognize it, however, we say, "Thanks be to God." †

## Sunday Readings

**Exodus 17:3–7**

[The LORD answered,] "Strike the rock, and the water will flow from it for the people to drink."

**Romans 5:1–2, 5–8**

The love of God has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit.

**John 4:5–42 or John 4:5–15, 19b–26, 39a, 40–42**

[Jesus said,] "The water I shall give will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life."



**Answers often come from the deserts of our lives.**

## A Word from Pope Leo XIV

We feel a deep and burning thirst that no drink in this world can satisfy. Knowing this, let us not deceive our hearts by trying to satisfy them with cheap imitations!... Let us turn this thirst into a step stool, like children who stand on tiptoe, in order to peer through the window of encounter with God.

HOMILY, ROME, AUGUST 3, 2025



## REFLECTION QUESTIONS

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- Have you ever found grace in an unexpected place?
- Have you ever missed unexpected grace?



# Mind Your Manners

Fr. Byron Miller, CSsR

**E**vil isn't a new phenomenon. The Book of Judges, for example, presents a faithless time that may rival what's happening in our world today. The twenty-one chapters are so filled with vandalism and war, murder and assassination, fratricide and suicide, that it makes a grim statement on the worst of humanity. Observers of our culture offer proof that civilization is rapidly in decline. Consider America's diminishment as a world leader, the seemingly cavalier attitude toward an uninhabitable planet for future generations, and adults engaged in road rage and fatal duels over parking spaces.

Etiquette and manners are reasonable behaviors for civility that society has agreed upon over time. They essentially say, I dignify you because you are created in God's likeness—even as you answer your mobile phone while I do so! Manners help adjust the self in a self-centered life.

Sadly, the anonymous social-media environment has created new measurements for what's acceptable. Loud talking

on a phone during a show in a theater is unacceptable, and frequent texting during a formal meal in a restaurant or at Mass are frowned upon. But those behaviors pale compared to the loss of civility and respect for others when we see insults, bullying, and threats on social media impair face-to-face dynamics. "There is the dangerous phenomenon of young people becoming 'social hermits' who risk alienating themselves completely from society," Pope Francis warned.

When people use new media to show respect for human dignity, they can transform the world to unite into a global village in unimaginable ways! If we use new media to hide from the world or to bash people by writing things we might never say aloud, we damage ourselves and others. Let common decency prevail! †

**Manners help  
adjust the self in a  
self-centered life.**

From *Daybreaks: Daily Reflections for Lent and Easter* by Fr. Byron Miller, CSsR, Liguori Publications (828362). To order, call 800-325-9521 or visit [Liguori.org](http://Liguori.org).

## Wisdom from Catholic Update

From "Our Holiest Week: A Practical Guide for the Holy Week Liturgies"

The presence of Christ in the Eucharist is not an end in itself; it is also the means to build up the unity of the parish and of the whole body of Christ. Maybe it is easier to see Christ in the Blessed Sacrament than to see him in the faces of the ordinary men and women around us. But, in the midst of gold vestments and vessels, ringing bells, and smoking censers, when we solemnly recall the institution of the Eucharist and the incomprehensible miracle of God's continuing presence among us, we wash feet! We are confronted with the reality that we cannot love God unless we love our neighbor.

*Catholic Update*—a subscription newsletter published eleven times a year—explores Church tradition and teaching on contemporary topics. For more information, call 800-325-9521 or visit [Liguori.org](http://Liguori.org).



So that we may recognize  
you wherever we are and  
proclaim your presence  
to all those we meet, we  
pray—Lord, let us be like  
you.

The Redemptorists

## WEEKDAY READINGS

March 9–14

**Monday**, Lenten Weekday: 2 Kgs 5:1–15ab  
/ Lk 4:24–30

**Tuesday**, Lenten Weekday: Dn 3:25, 34–43  
/ Mt 18:21–35

**Wednesday**, Lenten Weekday: Dt 4:1, 5–9  
/ Mt 5:17–19

**Thursday**, Lenten Weekday: Jer 7:23–28  
/ Lk 11:14–23

**Friday**, Lenten Weekday: Hos 14:2–10  
/ Mk 12:28–34

**Saturday**, Lenten Weekday: Hos 6:1–6  
/ Lk 18:9–14