

## The Cycle A Gospels from John Third, Fourth and Fifth Weeks of Lent

These three Gospels are used during at least one Mass each Sunday on the 3rd, 4th and 5th Sundays of Lent whether in liturgical Cycle A, B, or C – when the Scrutinies are celebrated. They are used at every Sunday Mass during Cycle A (2014, 2017, 2020, 2023). These readings may also be used at every Mass every year, no matter the liturgical Cycle during the 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Sundays of Lent.\*

What is the reason that the Church would permit Year A readings for these Sundays of Lent in place of the Year B and C readings? These three readings from John's Gospel (the Woman at the Well; the Man Born blind; the Raising of Lazarus) are the oldest sets of readings used specifically for the preparation of those about to be baptized.

They closely parallel the conversion journey toward baptism and effectively convey the importance of faith in Christ. If in your parish this year you have Elect, then it is recommended that the entire parish pray and reflect on the same readings as the Elect, even if they will not be present at every Mass on those Sundays. This way the entire parish community is focusing their prayers for them.

In addition, through these readings, the faithful can also deepen their own conversion in preparation for renewing their baptismal promises at Easter. Therefore, with the reform of the Lectionary, the Church has reinstated these three readings as the premiere readings for the three Sundays before Holy Week, whether or not Scrutinies are celebrated.

*\*From the Lectionary for Mass, in the General Introduction, #97: "Because these Gospels [the Samaritan Woman, the Man Born Blind and the Raising of Lazarus] are of major importance in regard to Christian Initiation, they may also be read in Year B and Year C, especially in places where there are catechumens."*