**GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF AUSTRALIA**

# PARISH OF THE ANNUNCIATION OF OUR LADY, "EVANGELISMOS"

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## SUNDAY 6 MAY 2018

## SUNDAY OF THE SAMARITAN WOMAN

**EPISTLE The Reading is from St Paul's First Letter to the Hebrews**

**[7:26 – 8:2] For such a High Priest was fitting for us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and has become higher than the heavens; who does not need daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins and then for the people's, for this He did once for all when He offered up Himself. For the law appoints as high priests men who have weakness, but the word of the oath, which came after the law, appoints the Son who has been perfected forever. Now *this* is the main point of the things we are saying: We have such a High Priest, who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, a Minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle which the Lord erected, and not man.**

**EXPLANATION:**

Man's condition necessitated a High Priest far different from the Levitical Priests of the Old Law. This Priest is not only human as they were, but He is perfectly so (Divine). His characteristics are given – **"holy"** (full of piety), **"harmless"** (free of any evil), **"undefiled"** (clean,

both personally and ceremonially), **"separate from sinners"** (sinless). All of these qualities refer to Christ's manhood, which was perfect. **(7:26)** Unlike the Levitical Priests, Christ had no sin of His own, so His offering was made on behalf of His fellow human being. He offered up Himself, the perfect priest and the perfect offering (victim). Being perfect, his offering was **"once and for all"**, whereas their offspring had to be repeated since none of their sacrifices were sufficient or perfect. **(7:27)** For such priests appointed by the Law are subject to weaknesses and limitations, but Christ has authority over all and is not subject to any limitations. **(7:28)** Our great High Priest Jesus Christ is present in heaven, being still both God and Man, having ascended into heaven with the human nature He had assumed. His high priestly office continues and He is **"seated"** at the right hand of the Father which indicates equality of honour. **(8:1)** Christ is the **"Minister"** or High Priest, the "liturgist" of the heavenly liturgy Who brings unto God the Father those who believe in Him by means of the mystery of the Holy Eucharist and thus perfecting them unto holiness by a service superior to the Levitical Law of bloody sacrifices and offerings of incense. The sanctuary in 8:2 is now contrasted with the tabernacle ("tent") in which the Old Covenant sacrifices were made. Now the **"true tabernacle"** refers to the heavenly Holy of Holies which has been **"erected"** by God Himself, not by man, as was, of necessity, the earthly tabernacle. **(8:2)**

**GOSPEL The Reading is from the Gospel of St John [4:5-42]**

**So He came to a city of Samaria which is called Sychar, near the plot of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied from His journey, sat thus by the well. It was about the sixth hour. A woman of Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give Me a drink." For His disciples had gone away into the city to buy food. Then the woman of Samaria said to Him, "How is it that You, being a Jew, ask a drink from me, a Samaritan woman?" For Jews**

**have no dealings with Samaritans. Jesus answered and said to her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, 'Give Me a drink', you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water." The woman said to Him, "Sir, You have nothing to draw with, and the well is deep. Where then do You get that living water? Are You greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well, and drank from it himself, as well as his sons and his livestock?" Jesus answered and said to her, "Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again, but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life." The woman said to Him, "Sir, give me this water, that I may not thirst, nor come here to draw." Jesus said to her, "Go, call your husband, and come here." The woman answered and said, "I have no husband." Jesus said to her, "You have well said, 'I have no husband,' for you have had five husbands, and the one whom you now have is not your husband; in that you spoke truly." The woman said to Him, "Sir, I perceive that You are a prophet. "Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, and you Jews say that in Jerusalem is the place where one ought to worship." Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe in Me, the hour is coming when you will neither on this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, worship the Father. You worship what you do not know; we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth. The woman said to Him, "I know that Messiah is coming" (who is called Christ). "When He comes, He will tell us all things." Jesus said to her, "I who speak to you am He." And at this point His disciples came, and they marvelled that He talked with a woman; yet no one said, "What do You seek?" or "Why are You talking with her?" The woman then left her waterpot, went her way into the city, and said to the men, "Come, see a Man who told me all things that I ever did. Could this be the Christ?" Then they went out of the city and came to Him. In the meantime His disciples urged Him, saying, "Rabbi, eat." But He said to them, "I have food to eat of which you do not know." Therefore the disciples said to one another, "Has anyone brought Him anything to eat?" Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to**

**finish His work. Do you not say, 'There are still four months and then comes the harvest? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest! And he who reaps receives wages, gathers fruit for eternal life, that both he who sows and he who reaps may rejoice together. For in this the saying is true: "One sows and another reaps." I sent you to reap that for which you have not laboured; others have laboured and you have entered into their labours." And many of the Samaritans of that city believed in Him because of the word of the woman who testified, "He told me all that I ever did." So when the Samaritans had come to Him, they urged Him to stay with them; and He stayed there two days. And many more believed because of his own word. Then they said to the woman, "Now we believe, not because of what you said, for we ourselves have heard Him and we know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world."**

**EXPLANATION:**

Jesus was not offended when the Samaritan woman refused to "**give him a drink"**. He said to her, "If you knew who it is that asks, you would have asked Him for **"living water"**, that is, spiritual water which believers receive at Baptism; which is divine life from God Who is the fountain of life, from which this water springs up to eternal life in the age to come. But to receive this gift of the Holy Spirit she must first repent. Jesus helps her to begin her new life by revealing her past so that she puts her trust in Him and opens her heart to His words. Although she is somewhat overwhelmed by all this, Jesus tells her even though salvation is from the Jews because the Word of God was first revealed to them, nevertheless **"the hour is coming"** (His death on the Cross) when all people, Jews, Samaritans and Gentiles will worship God in **"spirit and in truth"** and not by animal sacrifices. That is, the Father is Spirit and Jesus is Truth. So to truly experience God's presence in all its fullness we must worship God in Spirit and Truth. Jesus then reveals to her that He, **"Who is speaking to her"** is the truth; that He is more than a prophet and more than the Jewish Messiah; He is the Incarnate God Himself.