Today we celebrate the first of three what we call “Scrutinies.”
There’s something very uncomfortable about that word: SCRUTINY –
kind of like scraping your fingernail of a chalkboard.
   It doesn’t sound especially inviting.

References here to search, inquire about, look into, very carefully.

Self-inquiry, self-searching;
   scrub, scour, scrape

See clearly what is in the way.
See clearly how God is providing living water in the midst of life’s desert

A few months ago, David Wilder came to me.
He said he’d been bringing his wife to Mass for a while
   and was very moved by his experience here.
He wanted to inquire about becoming Catholic.
I asked if he had ever been baptized. He said, “No.”

Now by some accounts, up until then,
   David had been pretty negative about the Church

A few weeks later, David brought Jackie, his wife, to see me.
She said she had decided on her own that she wanted to become Catholic.
She is a baptized Baptist.

Both have been guided by Sister Eileen Houlihan, who acted as their catechist.

So, now as we go through this brief Rite of Scrutiny,
   let the readings we just heard, in a sense play in the background.

We’re asking you, David, to go deep inside yourself in the days and weeks
before you are sacramentally joined to the Body of Christ. 
Go deep and *ask God* to root out whatever in you might still be grumbling,
still be saying, “Is the Lord with us or not?”
Go deep and recognize the water coming from the Rock.

It’s got to be done with and through and in God.

We’re encouraging you, David, to go deep inside yourself.
Ask God to help you trust more and more fully
that God’s grace is being *poured* into your heart,
as St. Paul says to the Romans and all of us today.
Ask God to root out the skeptic
that says you’re too old for this stuff.

We’re urging you, David, to go deep inside yourself
to find the vestiges of the likes of that Samaritan woman
who goes toe to toe with Jesus himself
and ends up discovering the real love her life.
The one who provides water, welling up to provide eternal life.

Here’s a saying I found that may help you the next few weeks:
As agonizing as our thirst for God might be,
as exhausting as our journeys to God might seem,
the yearning that God has for us
and the journey that God has made into our hearts
surpass all that infinitely.

Since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,
through whom we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand; and we boast in
our hope of sharing the glory of God. Hope does not disappoint us, because God’s love
has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.

For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. Indeed, rarely
will anyone die for a righteous person – though perhaps for a good person someone
might actually dare to die. But God proves God’s love for us in that while we still were
sinners, Christ died for us.