

## **"WHERE IS YOUR WELL?"**

Christ's encounter with the Samaritan woman is a model of what our Christian life should be. In her we see represented all those who wish to know Jesus. We also see the two sides of every path to conversion: on one hand there are man's desires: "give me something to drink"; and on the other hand, Jesus's proposal: "if you only knew the gift of God."

Both the first and the second reading of today point to the gospel reading, though in different ways. In the first reading the people's longing for water prepares us to hear the Samaritan woman's longing for a water that would spare her the need to keep returning to the well. In the second reading Paul's words while we were still sinners provide a setting for Jesus' engaging the woman in conversation while she was still a sinner. He explains that with the coming of Christ and the New Covenant, this well of grace has been placed inside of our own hearts. This is why Christians can persevere in what is right even against all odds, can stay strong and joyful even in life's deserts. St Paul writes: "And hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us."

The gospel reading itself offers us several lessons. Christ wants to make this difference in our lives, just as he did with the Samaritan woman. How can we help him? We can make a daily trip to the well. The well where the Samaritan woman encountered Jesus is a symbol of prayer. When we pray, we draw from the well of God's grace, wisdom, and love, refreshing and nourishing our souls. We all pray, but we can all learn to pray better. We all believe in Christ, but we can all develop a closer friendship with him. That's what prayer is all about. And developing that closer friendship is the secret to experiencing the transformation Christ can make in us and through us. The woman at the well is recognizing that Jesus is the source of the Eternal life. She wants to be filled with His presence and does not hesitate to listen to His voice. The encounter with Jesus totally changes her. She is not accepted by the society, but totally loved and accepted by Jesus. Her town folks first come to Jesus after hearing the woman's story of her encounter with him. They invited Jesus to stay with

them and he indeed stayed there two days. Their interaction with him during those days led them to say to the woman: we no longer believe because of your word, for we have heard for ourselves... We ourselves may have been led to the Lord initially by someone else's words and this can be a promising beginning. But in the last analysis our believing will need to rest on a personal experience of the Lord. We have today abundance, superabundance of words about Jesus. What we need, more than words, is the testimony of believers, who know the Lord from more than just hearsay.

Where is your well?

- Where is the time and place where you encounter Jesus? Is it your private prayer? Eucharist? Daily reading? Encounter with other people? What and where is it?

As much as you are receiving, you also should think what you give to others: what do you do to make your "well" be a place and source of life eternal – what do you give to others?

What are the moments/ times when you feel loved by Jesus? When are you the person who makes it possible to experience to others?

Our souls are thirsty, and Jesus is waiting at the well of prayer, thirsting to satisfy our thirst as only he can.

Today, he will prove his love again by giving himself in this Mass.

When he does, let's thank him for the gift of his saving friendship, and let's promise him that we won't let our selfishness or laziness cause that friendship to die of thirst.

This Lent I invite you to pray like the Samaritan woman: "Lord, I'm thirsting for you; I'm tired from the journey. Give me something to drink. You are the life of my life. Fill me with You." Then we will see, like St. Teresa of Avila, that "Whoever has God, lacks nothing; God alone is enough."