

Third Sunday of Lent- A: Ex17:3–7; Rom 5:1–2, 5–8; Jn 4:5–42: Our Deepest Thirst Is for God

A mother once sent her little boy to bed. After a few minutes, the boy called out, “Mommy, I’m thirsty. Can you bring me a glass of water?” The mother replied, “No, drinking water before bed is not good for you. Go to sleep.” A few minutes later the boy called again, “Mommy, I’m thirsty.” Now the mother became annoyed and said, “If you ask again, I will spank you!” But after a short silence the boy called once more, “Mommy…” Now the mother was really angry: “What is it?” The little boy replied sweetly, “Mommy, when you come to spank me, can you bring me a glass of water?”

That little boy must have been truly thirsty! He was willing to accept a spanking just to get a glass of water. In fact, thirst is one of the most basic human experiences. We can live weeks without food, but not even a day without water. Our bodies are mostly made of water. Without it, life becomes weak and fragile. But today’s readings remind us that **there is another thirst — a deeper thirst — the thirst of the soul.**

In the first reading, the Israelites are wandering in the desert. They are thirsty and begin complaining against Moses: “Why did you bring us out of Egypt? Are we here to die of thirst?” In their suffering they begin to question God: “*Is the Lord in our midst or not?*” Yet even when they doubt, God shows His mercy. He tells Moses to strike the rock, and water flows out for the people. God responds to their thirst.

In the Gospel today we meet another thirsty person — the **Samaritan woman at the well**. Like everyone else, she comes to draw water because she needs it for daily life. But her thirst is not only physical. She is also **spiritually thirsty**. She is searching for happiness, love, and meaning.

The Gospel tells us she had five husbands and now lives with another man. Her life shows a restless search for fulfillment. She kept looking for happiness in relationships, yet her heart remained unsatisfied. Then at the well she meets **Jesus**. Jesus tells her something very profound: “Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I shall give will never thirst.”

Jesus is telling her — and us — that nothing in this world can fully satisfy the deepest longing of the human heart. Success, money, relationships, or pleasure may satisfy us for a time, but the heart still longs for something more.

At the well, the Samaritan woman meets what we might call the **seventh man** in her life. In the Bible, the number six symbolizes imperfection, while seven represents

completeness and perfection. In meeting Jesus, she finally meets the One who can truly fulfill her life, change and transform her life.

The **living water** that Jesus offers is the life of God within us — the grace of the Holy Spirit. In the second reading, Saint Paul explains this when he says: “The love of God has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit.” That is the living water — **God’s love filling our hearts.**

Saint Teresa of Calcutta frequently said that the worst poverty is not being able to know Christ, and that if we would just open our eyes and look around, we could see that people are thirsty for God. Nothing else in this world can ever satisfy this deepest longing of our soul. **St. Gregory Nazianzen** said, "God thirsts for the one who thirsts for Him!"

And that is the truth: God thirsts for us! It is God who always initiates everything. Jesus said, “It was not you who chose me, but I who chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit that will remain, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name he may give you.” (Jn 15:16). The Apostle St. John said, “In this is love: not that we have loved God, but that he loved us and has sent his Son as an offering for our sins” (1Jn 4:10).

When Jesus spoke to the Samaritan woman, He first said, “Give me a drink.” Later, while hanging on the cross, He cried out, “I thirst.” These words reveal the heart of Christ. He thirsts not only for water — He thirsts for our love, our faith, and our salvation. God is always the one who takes the first step toward us.

Lent is a time for us to rediscover this thirst for God. Like the Samaritan woman, we are invited to come to the well and meet Jesus personally. Through prayer, silence, confession, Eucharist and reflection, we allow Him to speak to our hearts. That Eucharist is Jesus’s Well. Here Jesus meets us again and fills ours with His grace and mercy in the form of His body and blood.

The Samaritan woman’s life changed after meeting Jesus. She left her water jar and ran to her town saying, “Come and see a man who told me everything I have done.” She became a missionary because she had encountered the living water. That is the invitation for us today.

As the Psalmist beautifully says: “As the deer longs for streams of water, so my soul longs for you, O God.” May this Lenten season help us recognize our deepest thirst

— the thirst for God. And may we come to Jesus, the source of living water, who alone can fill our hearts with lasting peace, joy, and eternal life. Amen