

3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Lent  
March 15, 2020  
“Complaints, or Trust?”

Ex 17:3-7

Rom 5:1...8

Jn 4:5...42

My Brothers and Sisters in the Lord –

One of the things we can say about most of us in the Western World is that we are seldom, if ever, truly satisfied. We always seem to want more. We want things to be better. We are always seeking the new, the different, the more desirable. Often, we confuse wants with needs – and spend money on the wrong things.

When things don't go our way, we begin to complain. We complain to friends, to those who are close to us – and, often, we even complain to God!

However, in all of our wanting and complaining, we usually forget how fortunate we are in so many ways. There are always others who have much less than we have – others who are far worse off than ourselves, whether physically, emotionally, or economically. We also forget the many blessings that we, sadly, take for granted!

So, how do we extricate ourselves from this downward spiral of negativity? How do we become grateful – and more accepting of our lot in life or of our particular place in the world today? Fortunately, the scriptures for this Sunday give us a great deal of direction in this regard.

When the Chosen People, in the desert, grumbled and complained against Moses, they were really angry with God. Although they were believers, they really had no personal relationship with God. They were seriously lacking in faith and trust. They did not truly know God at all in any personal way. They were too absorbed in their daily lives and with the challenges of living to pay much attention to God.

They had forgotten all the blessings that were theirs – all that God had done for them – Deliverance from slavery in Egypt – Salvation from Pharaoh's army – The Manna, the quail, the preservation in the desert! Consequently, when faced with a new hardship,

they grumbled and complained – instead of trusting in God and offering prayers based on faith and trust!

In the Gospel selection, the Samaritan woman came to the well in the heat of the day, when no one, usually, was around because she was ashamed of who and what she had become. No doubt, she couldn't believe her ears when Jesus asked her for a drink. However, she must have kept her relationship with God alive, despite her sinful situation. Although she resisted Jesus at first, she, gradually, opened herself to all that he had to say.

Jesus had a spiritual, life-giving water! This water would completely transform the hearts and souls of anyone who entered into a relationship with him. What Jesus had to share was grace – freedom and deliverance from all the wants and desires that distract us from who we really are and what God wants each of us to become. Jesus offers a new way of living here in this life. This new way leads to an eternal life with him and with the Godhead after this life is over!

As Jesus reached out to the Samaritans, so, too, does he reach out to us. He wants a relationship with each of us despite all of our mistakes, failings, and sins. He asks us to trust in him and in God's unfolding plan for us.

This is the reason St. Paul writes that we can have peace with God through all that Jesus has done for us. We even have God's love poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit who has been given to us!

So, Brothers and Sisters, far from complaining, we should look deeper into our hearts and lives to discover, once again, all that God has done and continues to do for us. It doesn't matter if our wants go unfulfilled – It doesn't matter that we suffer because of others and because of the hardships of life. It doesn't matter that our life here ends in death! What really matters is our faith and trust in God's ultimate plan for us. What really matters is that we grow in faith – in our relationship with God through Jesus. What really matters is that we remain faithful to God even in our darkest hours and when others no longer hope!

So, let us praise God and give thanks to Him who has done so much for us and given us salvation in and through His Son, Jesus!

Amen.

March 15, 2020

Msgr. Russell G. Terra