

THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT (A)
MY SOUL THIRSTS FOR LIVING WATER

March 11/12, 2023

One of the essential commodities human beings need to survive is water. Water is life and both plants and animals need it to survive. This explains why the Israelites complained to Moses when they were in the desert on their way to the promised land. It was so important for them that they wished to be slaves in Egypt than to die of thirst in the desert.

God proved to them that He was in control of everything and gave them water from the rock. He let them know that He was in their midst and would provide for all their needs.

Jesus explained to the woman who came to fetch water that her soul needed something more than ordinary water. She needed water but her soul was thirstier than her human flesh. She was ready for the living water Jesus promised and it might be that she did not know what it really was. Jesus taught her about the Spirit and the true worship of God. She needed conversion of heart and a new way of life. The woman opened up to Jesus and confirmed what Jesus disclosed about her life. At that time, she forgot about why she went to the well and went to share her experience with Jesus with her people in the town.

What is this living water? It is the Spirit of God, and we know this from Jesus Himself when He cried out: "Let anyone who is thirsty come to me! Let anyone who believes in me come to me! As scripture says, 'From his heart shall flow streams of living water.' He was speaking of the Spirit which those who believe in Him were to receive" (Jn.7:37b-39a).

Moreover, Jesus is the Rock from which water flowed for the Israelites to drink. This is what St. Paul told the believers in Corinth: "I want you to be quite certain, brothers and sisters, that our ancestors all had the cloud over them, and all passed through the sea. In the cloud and in the sea, they were all baptized into Moses; all ate the same spiritual food, and all drank the same spiritual drink, since they drank from the spiritual rock which followed them, and that rock was Christ" (1Cor.10:1-4).

The Israelites complained because they lost hope in Moses and in God. They considered their problem to be too much for God to solve for them. They

easily forgot about the miraculous deliverance from the Egyptians when crossing the Red Sea. When they were helpless, God saved them from their enemies.

Like the Israelites in the desert on their way to the promised land, we are also pilgrims on this earth on our way to the heavenly kingdom of God. We may not be thirsty because we have plenty of water to drink, but our souls may be thirsty because we have rejected the Rock from which grace flows. Moreover, we have not allowed the Spirit to lead us.

We are losing hope in life maybe because our attention is focused solely on how to meet the needs of the body. Or we are overwhelmed by the human weakness. We have allowed ourselves to be overcome by the human flesh. We have lost hope too because of the day-to-day problems we face. But St. Paul assures us that if we hope in God, we will not be disappointed because He has given us His Son, the source of living water and grace.

Am I worshipping the Lord in Spirit and in truth? Am I paying lip service to God and my heart is far from Him? If Jesus reveals certain weaknesses in my life as He did to the woman, what will my response be? For example, if He tells me that I have been a liar, or a glutton, or a drunkard, or a fornicator or adulterous, or prideful, or slothful, or greedy, and any other vice, will I accept who I am or will I dispute it or give excuses? If I lay bare my sins and weaknesses before the Lord, He will forgive and transform my life, and my soul will be satisfied. I need faith, hope and love; the gifts of the Holy Spirit.