

FIRST READING

Give us water to drink (Exodus 17:2).

A reading from the book of Exodus

17:3-7

The people of Israel were thirsty and kept on complaining.
They said, "Moses, did you bring us out of Egypt
Just to let us and our families and our animals die of thirst?"

Then Moses prayed, "Lord, what am I going to do with these people?
They are about to stone me to death."

The Lord answered, "Take some of the leaders with you
and go on ahead of the rest of the people.
Take along the walking stick that you used to strike the Nile River,
and when you get to the rock at Sinai,
I will be there with you.
Strike the rock with the stick,
and water will pour out for the people to drink."

Moses did this while the leaders of the people watched.
He named that place Massah and Meribah.
This was because the people complained and tested the Lord by asking,
"Is the Lord really with us?"

The word of the Lord.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

95:1-2, 7e-9c

R. (8) If today you hear God's voice, harden not your hearts.

Sing joyful songs to the Lord!
Praise the mighty rock
where we are safe.
Come to worship him
with thankful hearts
and songs of praise.

R. If today you hear God's voice, harden not your hearts.

Listen to God's voice today!
Don't be stubborn and rebel
as your ancestors did
at Meribah and at Massah
out in the desert.
They tested God and saw
the things he did.

R. If today you hear God's voice, harden not your hearts.

VERSE BEFORE THE GOSPEL

See John 2:42, 15

R. Glory and praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Lord, you are truly the Savior of the world;
give me living water, that I may never thirst again.

R. Glory and praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

GOSPEL

The water that I shall give will become a spring of eternal life.

† A reading from the holy gospel according to John

4:5-15, 19b-26, 39a, 40-42

On his way to Galilee,
Jesus came to the town of Sychar.
It was near the field that Jacob had long ago given to his son Joseph.
The well that Jacob had dug was still there,
and Jesus sat down beside it
because he was tired from traveling.
It was noon,
and after Jesus' disciples had gone into town to buy some food,
a Samaritan woman came to draw water from the well.

Jesus asked her, "Would you please give me a drink of water?"

"You are a Jew," she replied,
"and I am a Samaritan woman.
How can you ask me for a drink of water

when Jews and Samaritans won't have anything to do with each other?"

Jesus answered, "You don't know what God wants to give you, and you don't know who is asking you for a drink. If you did, you would ask him for the water that gives life."

"Sir," the woman said,
"you don't even have a bucket, and the well is deep. Where are you going to get this life-giving water? Our ancestor Jacob dug this well for us, and his family and animals got water from it. Are you greater than Jacob?"

Jesus answered,
"Everyone who drinks this water will get thirsty again. But no one who drinks the water I give will ever be thirsty again. The water I give is like a flowing fountain that gives eternal life."

The woman replied, "Sir, please give me a drink of that water! Then I won't get thirsty and have to come to this well again." She also told him,
"Sir, I can see that you are a prophet. My ancestors worshiped on this mountain, but you Jews say Jerusalem is the only place to worship."

Jesus said to her: "Believe me,
The time is coming when you won't worship God either on this mountain or in Jerusalem. You Samaritans don't really know the one you worship. But we Jews do know the God we worship, and by using us God will save the world. But a time is coming, and it is already here! Even now the true worshipers are being led by the Spirit to worship the Father according to the truth. These are the ones the Father is seeking to worship him. God is Spirit, and those who worship God must be led by the Spirit to worship him according to the truth."

The woman said, "I know that the Messiah will come. He is the one we call Christ. When he comes, he will explain everything to us."

"I am that one," Jesus told her,
"and I am speaking to you now."

A lot of Samaritans in that town put their faith in Jesus.
They came and asked him to stay in their town,
and he stayed on for two days.

Many more Samaritans put their faith in Jesus
because of what they heard him say.
They told the woman, "We no longer have faith in Jesus
just because of what you told us.
We have heard him ourselves,
and we are certain that he is the Savior of the world!"

The gospel of the Lord.

Third Sunday of Lent – Living Water!

Reflection: The readings today center on one thing – WATER. Water is used several times in the Bible. Water is very powerful and often destructive. Water is important to our earth, to our health, to the foods we eat, and very important for the human person for life. People need water to stay alive. Remember the ashes? Without water we turn to dust. Our bodies have a large amount of water inside. Water gives us life. Water is Life!

The water from the rock gave life to the people in the desert. They begged God for water – for life. We are told again that we belong to God. We need water for life. God provides the water of life. We need God. Jesus invites us to have water that brings us to a deeper life with God. The water Jesus wants to give us is more powerful than a cold drink of water on a hot summer day. The life giving water Jesus wants to give us is a “Living Water!” Jesus describes this water as a bubbling fountain. A fountain of water that is constantly moving, it has life.

Some fountains provide cool, playful and refreshing water. Such as a drinking fountain, a water fountain in the park, a local swimming pool. Some fountains are awesome, beautiful and powerful; such as the Niagara waterfall, a bursting geyser, or a destructive flood or tsunami. Many Parish Churches a fountain of flowing water can be found. This is the “Living Water” of Baptism. The Water of Life!

Invitation to Action: As babies many of us received the waters of Baptism. Jesus received Baptism as an adult. The awesome power in the waters of our Baptism is the Life Giving Spirit of God. This is when we began our walk with Jesus. The Spirit of God guides us along the path to be refreshed by the life giving waters that leads us home to God.

Open our heart to living water

1. Find a fountain and playfully welcome the flowing waters – the blessing of God’s holy water.
2. Take a walk along the edges of a pond, lake, river or ocean, playfully welcome the water to tickle your feet – the blessing of God’s holy water.
3. Take a refreshing shower, bath or swim and welcome the water to playfully splash upon your face and body – the blessing of God’s holy water.
4. Place your hands into the fountain of the Living Waters of Baptism and sign yourself to remember that you belong to God, that you are a follower of Jesus, and that you are guided by the Spirit of God – God’s Holy Water.

Activity

Gospel: Jesus at the well with the Samaritan Woman

Place several small bowls of water on a table. Have paper towels ready for spills and clean-up. Precut small rectangular sponges (the kind that are flat and then puff up when placed in water) into the shape of the cross. Distribute one sponge cross to each child. Talk about the hardness and dryness of the sponge. Then let each child dip their sponge in water. What does it do? Talk about how the sponge changes. Compare this to their lives and their relationship with God. Ask the children to take the sponge home and put it in a small bowl of water (if possible, holy water). When the family comes together for a meal, ask everyone to touch the sponge cross before making the sign of the cross. This is an at-home reminder that our Baptism with the water of life has made us followers of Jesus.