

Homily > Lent III (A), March 23, 2025.

Today, our readings invite us to reflect deeply on the theme of thirst and the living water that only Christ can provide. This central message speaks to our own spiritual thirst and God's unfailing desire to quench it.

In the First Reading from Exodus, we hear about the Israelites in the desert, wandering and desperate, suffering from thirst. They complain to Moses, asking, "Is the Lord in our midst or not?" In their struggle, they question God's presence and His care for them. Their thirst for water becomes a symbol of a deeper spiritual thirst, a longing for God's presence, a desire to feel His closeness.

In response, God provides water from the rock, but also calls them to trust in His providence. The rock from which the water flows is a precursor to Christ Himself, who, as St. Paul writes in the Second Reading from Romans, offers us a new relationship with God. Through Christ, we are justified by faith and have peace with God. The Holy Spirit, poured into our hearts, fills us with God's love, and this love strengthens our faith, even in times of trial.

The Psalm today invites us to respond to God's presence with joy and reverence. It reminds us that God is our rock, our salvation, and we should come before Him with thanksgiving. When we gather to worship, we are responding to His call, acknowledging that He alone can satisfy the deepest desires of our hearts.

This longing for living water reaches its climax in the Gospel reading from St. John. Jesus meets the Samaritan woman at the well, and in their conversation, He reveals Himself as the source of "living water" that quenches our spiritual thirst. The woman, initially focused on physical water, is led by Jesus to recognize a deeper need. Jesus offers her a water that will become in her "a spring of water welling up to eternal life."

Jesus' words are not just about quenching thirst—they are about offering a relationship that transforms. The water He gives is the gift of the Holy Spirit, the very presence of God, which fills our souls with peace, joy, and eternal life. Like the Samaritan woman, we are all invited to move beyond surface needs and open ourselves to this deeper encounter with God. In doing so, we become witnesses to others, just as she went on to share her experience with her community.

Brothers and sisters, as we journey through Lent, let us recognize our own thirsts. Are we thirsty for recognition, success, or material things? Or are we thirsting for God, for His love and peace? Let us, like the Samaritan woman, seek the living water that only Christ can provide. As we come to the altar today, let us receive Christ in the Eucharist, the ultimate source of living water, and allow His love to refresh and transform us.

May this Lenten season be an opportunity for us to deepen our relationship with the Lord, to allow His Spirit to fill us, and to share His living water with those around us.