

Thirst for Living Water

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ,

What do you thirst for today and in life?

The discovery of water anywhere in the world or in any planet shows a sign of life. Water is one of the necessities of life. Without it we cannot survive. Today's first reading (Exodus 17:3-7) brings to light the weariness and complaint of the Israelites against Moses and God as they yearn for water to drink. Despite their sin of despair, their thirst was quenched by God through the natural waters from the rock at Massah and Meribah. However, the Israelites were thirsty again.

The Gospel (John 4:5-42) presents Christ's encounter with the Samaritan woman, an encounter which indicates that Jesus is the well/source of the living water that will forever quench all thirsts. The Gospel puts it this way: "whoever drinks the water I shall give will never thirst; the water I shall give will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life" (John 4:14).

This Sunday is when the first scrutiny for catechumens (those preparing to be baptized at Easter) takes place. The catechumens yearn for the Living Water that quenches all thirsts. Today's scriptures show us and the catechumens how our thirst will be quenched. For "in these passages we meet the Lord as the Rock from which water flowed forth in the desert" (Exodus 17:3-7), "and we draw near to Christ, who is Living Water for those who believe in him" (John 4:5-42). The Rite of Scrutiny succinctly captures this in its prayer when it says: "God of power, you sent your Son to be our Savior. Grant that these catechumens, who like the woman of Samaria, thirst for living water, may turn to the Lord as they hear his word and acknowledge the sins and weaknesses that weigh them down."

On this Sunday, the catechumens and all of us are called to review our lives before Christ, just like the Samaritan woman did, and lay bare before God whatever faults and hidden wounds that might prevent us from drinking from the well of living water. Our parish faith sharing groups and the upcoming Lenten Penance service provide us with great opportunities. Come and prepare your heart so that you are ready to drink from the wellspring of Living Water, Jesus Christ Our Savior.

May our loving God extend his mercy and forgiveness to us all.

Fr. Anthony Ahamefula