



Homily for 3/15/2020

Third Sunday of Lent

Rev. J. David Carter, JCL

*Jesus Thirsts for You*

In the reading from Exodus we hear that the people grumble against Moses in their thirst for water. God then provides for the people of Israel flowing water from a rock to quench their thirst.

In the Gospel it is Jesus who asks for a drink of water from the Samaritan woman. This begins a dialogue with her that leads to Jesus reaching down deep into her soul and drawing out salvation for her.

On the Cross, one of Jesus' last words are "I thirst". God, the creator of all, thirsts much more than in a physical way. He has a spiritual thirst for you, me and all of humanity. I can't say it any better than a saint, so I will let Mother Teresa of Calcutta say it.

*I Thirst for You. Yes, that is the only way to even begin to describe My love for you. I THIRST FOR YOU. I thirst to love you and to be loved by you – that is how precious you are to Me. I THIRST FOR YOU. Come to Me, and I will fill your heart and heal your wounds. I will make you a new creation, and give you peace, even in all your trials I THIRST FOR YOU. You must never doubt My mercy, My acceptance of you, My desire to forgive, My longing to bless you and live My life in you. I THIRST FOR YOU. If you feel unimportant in the eyes of the world, that matters not at all. For Me, there is no one any more important in the entire world than you. I THIRST FOR YOU. Open to Me, come to Me, thirst for Me, give me your life – and I will prove to you how important you are to My Heart.*

*Whenever you do open the door of your heart, whenever you come close enough, you will hear Me say to you again and again, not in mere human words but in spirit. "No matter what you have done, I love you for your own sake Come to Me with your misery and your sins, with your troubles and needs, and with all your longing to be loved. I stand at the door of your heart and knock. Open to Me, for I THIRST FOR YOU ..." "Jesus is God, therefore His Love and His Thirst are infinite. He, the Creator of the universe, asked for the love of his creatures. He has thirst for our love ... These words: "I THIRST" ... Do they echo in our soul?"*

*Blessed Mother Teresa of Calcutta*

We have to open the door of our hearts in prayer in order to receive the living water that God desires to give to us. To that end, and one of the fruits of my recent sabbatical, is a pastoral initiative that I would like to begin here at the Basilica. I would like for us to have structured time for quiet prayer during Mass. Prayer requires silence and time. Silence so the soul can be attended to without exterior distraction and time to open the door, welcome the Divine guest in and sit at His feet. The initiative, therefore, is that after the homily and after Communion we as a community will commit ourselves to a set time for meditation without anything else going on. This will practically take place when the priest sits down after the homily and after cleansing the vessels after communion. At those points we will dedicate two minutes to quiet, silent prayer. At the one after the homily, to allow the Word of God just proclaimed to resonate in our interior and at the one after communion, to invite the Word made Flesh to enter the temple of our souls to be enthroned in our hearts. Two minutes sounds like a lot to some and it is definitely too little for others. It is good for us even to attend to our reaction to silence and stillness. Does it make me anxious? Do I fidget? Do I know how to enter silence? Bring this to the Lord and ask Him, "Lord, Teach us to Pray!"