



Christ in Our Neighborhood

March 12, 2023

Prayer

Father, you have taught us to overcome our sins by prayer, fasting, and works of mercy. When we are discouraged by our weakness, give us confidence in Your love. Grant this through our Lord, Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever. Amen.

Commentary

1st Reading: Exodus 17:3-7

Our readings this weekend invite us to thirst for God. God supplies us with all of our needs; even in times of trouble.

The Israelites complained as they wandered in the desert. Suffering from thirst, they began to grumble against the Lord. Though God lead them through the Red Sea and away from Pharaoh's army, they still failed to trust in the Lord.

How many times have we complained to God when our immediate needs weren't met? We can easily forget that God has always been on our side. Instead of counting our blessings, we find a reason to blame the Lord for our temporary misfortunes.

Instead of thirsting for immediate results, try thirsting for God! The Israelites were impatient. Instead of being impatient ourselves, perhaps we can patiently thirst for God who, in His time, will quench our thirst.

Thirst for God!

Questions

Have I ever been impatient with God?
Do I take time in prayer to count my blessings?

Commentary

2nd Reading: Romans 5:1-2, 5-8

When we make it our spiritual practice to thirst for God, we are acknowledging that God had already quenched our thirst at some point in our lives. Our hope in God is based on our prior experience of the Lord who has not disappointed us.

St. Paul had a perfect faith in the Lord who satisfied his every longing. This is why he could confidently say,

"...we boast in hope of the glory of God. And hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us."

We must hope in God who does not disappoint us. We must not be afraid to hope in God. Why lose another day without hope?

Pope John Paul II said, "It is very important to cross the threshold of hope, not to stop before it, but to let oneself be led." (Crossing the Threshold of Hope)

Our Lenten practices should include embracing the virtue of Hope and letting the love of God quench our souls.

Our hope is in the Lord who does not disappoint!

Question

When did I last place my hope in the Lord?

The commentaries over these 6 weeks of Lent are presented by Bishop John Dolan of the Diocese of Phoenix.

3rd Sunday of Lent

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Commentary

Gospel: John 4:5-42

Following our theme of thirsting, we find in today's Gospel of John the story of Jesus and the woman at the well.

Jesus asks the Samaritan woman to give him a drink. Later, he says to her that he will provide for her living water. In both cases, the woman misinterprets his meaning and assumes he is speaking about the water in the well. However, he has something else in mind.

Jesus says, "Give me a drink."

We thirst for God only because He first thirsts for us. He longs to be in communion with us and continually calls us to give Him our hearts. Our love should pour from our hearts to satisfy our God.

Unfortunately, on our own, we have proven that we can't give God a drink. On our own, we cannot pour out our love.

Jesus invites us the woman to drink from Him, the Living Water.

We cannot begin to pour out our love for God until we first drink from His Son, the water of eternal life.

It is said that we cannot give what he have not first received. Thanks be to God, we are able to love God with our whole heart because God has first loved us through Jesus His Son.

Question

How have I responded to the Love of God in my life?

This Week's Task

The readings for these next few weeks are designed to assist those who are preparing for the Sacraments of Initiation through Baptism, Eucharist, and Confirmation. For example, the image of water in today's readings relates to the Sacrament of Baptism.

Take time this week to pray for those who are preparing to celebrate the Sacraments of Initiation in the Church.

Group Prayer

The leader invites each member to pass a bowl of water and make a sign of the cross as a personal renewal of their own baptism.

After all have renewed their baptism, the leader invites the group to remain quiet for forty seconds. This is a time to be still and meditate on the Love of God which has been poured out on us through Jesus.

The leader will then guide the group in praying Psalm 95

Psalm

Response: If today you hear his voice, harden not your hearts.

Come, let us sing joyfully to the LORD;
let us acclaim the Rock of our salvation.
Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving;
let us joyfully sing psalms to him.

R: If today you hear his voice, harden not your hearts.

Come, let us bow down in worship;
let us kneel before the LORD who made us.
For he is our God,
and we are the people he shepherds,
the flock he guides.

R: If today you hear his voice, harden not your hearts.

Oh, that today you would hear his voice:
"Harden not your hearts as at Meribah,
as in the day of Massah in the desert,
Where your fathers tempted me;
they tested me though they had seen my works."

R: If today you hear his voice, harden not your hearts.

Conclude with an OUR FATHER

Have you celebrated all of your Sacraments of Initiation in the Church?

If you, or someone you know, would like to begin the process of full initiation in the Church, please visit your parish priest or director for religious education.

"Whoever
drinks
the water
I shall give
will never
thirst again."