



When those who study the cosmos think of the possibility of life outside of our planet Earth, they will have to consider the signs or traces of water. This is because with water there is life. Covering two-thirds of the Earth, water is what constitutes us. We can stay long without food, but not without water.

Water is not only a material substance; it also a metaphor. It contains within itself the mixed feelings in our hearts. The rush and anger in our hearts are like the ups and downs of life we daily face. The sound and the feel of water that touches our feet give a sense of calm in our souls.

Before the advent of the water system that brings running water directly to the faucets in our homes and buildings, life in a village anywhere revolved around the well. To have found a source of water for the community is to have discovered a buried treasure. In the biblical narratives, when the patriarchs and their families found a well, they saluted it with joy: “Spring up, O well!—so sing to it—the well that the princes sank, that the nobles of the people dug, with their scepters and their staffs” (Nm 21:18). The fact that many towns and cities in Israel have names beginning with Ein (from *ayin*, spring)—Ein Gedi, Ein Dor, Ein Kelt—suggests that settlements were built around a source of water. Also, a certain number of memorable love encounters took place near a well: Abraham’s servant and Rebekah (Gn 24:10-27), Jacob and Rachel (Gn 29:1-14), Moses and Reuel’s daughters (Ex 2:15-22).

We should look at today’s

## LIVING WATER, GIFT OF GOD



by Fr. Gil Alinsangan, SSP

Gospel reading in the light of the symbolism of the well, water, and other details. This is not just a chance encounter between a weary Jew and a suspecting Samaritan woman. This is a “love story” of the Messiah “thirsting” to give everyone water that quenches the deeper longing of the soul.

In the early Church, this Gospel passage was read during Lent to lead the catechumens to appreciate the sacrament of baptism that would initiate them to life with Christ. Obviously, the Christians were aware of the baptismal themes which the evangelist had woven into his story.

In an exquisite example of paradox, we see that it is Jesus

who is “longing” for something. He is thirsting to give salvation (“the spring of water welling up to eternal life”) to whomever he encounters. He has food other than what his disciples can offer: “My food is to do the will of the one who sent me and to finish his work.” The will of the Father and his own will are one: that men and women may have eternal life. And so, Jesus longs for the coming of the “hour”—his passion, death, and resurrection/glorification—so that he can give the “spring of eternal life”: the gift of the Holy Spirit. On the feast of the Tabernacle, Jesus will invite the people: “Let anyone who thirsts come to me and drink.” He will speak of the “rivers of living water” in reference to the Spirit which at that time cannot yet be given because he has not yet been glorified (cf Jn 7:37-39). But on the cross, Jesus will cry, *Consummatum est!*—“It is finished”—(Jn 19:30). His “I thirst” (Jn 19:28) is now satisfied because he has finished everything in fulfillment of the Father’s will, and the Spirit can now come, he who is “the fountain of eternal life.”

This is the gift that the catechumens receive on Easter Vigil when they are baptized “in water and the Holy Spirit” through which they are “born from above” (Jn 3:3). They are now recipients of the gift once promised to the woman of Samaria. And so are we. If only we knew the gift of God, then like the woman of Samaria we would leave our water jars behind and announce to others Jesus the Messiah who longs to satisfy our deepest longings.

## THE INTRODUCTORY RITES

### Entrance Antiphon

(Cf. Ps 25[24]:15–16)

(Recited when there is no opening song.)

**My eyes are always on the Lord, for he rescues my feet from the snare. Turn to me and have mercy on me, for I am alone and poor.**

### Greeting

(The sign of the cross is made here.)

**P**—The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**All**—**And with your spirit.**

### Introduction

(These [or similar words] may be used to address the assembly.)

**P**—We know from life how precious water is. When we are thirsty, there is nothing like a drink of fresh water. In today's Gospel, Jesus uses the image of bubbling water to illustrate the eternal life that he is offering us. Jesus alone can satisfy our thirst for meaning, for the divine. May our Eucharistic celebration be a prelude to our participation in the banquet of eternal life.

### Penitential Act

**P**—Brethren (brothers and sisters), let us acknowledge our sins, and so prepare ourselves to celebrate the sacred mysteries. (Pause)

**P**—You were sent to heal the contrite of heart: Lord, have mercy.

**All**—**Lord, have mercy.**

**P**—You came to call sinners: Christ, have mercy.

**All**—**Christ, have mercy.**

**P**—You are seated at the right hand of the Father to intercede for us: Lord, have mercy.

**All**—**Lord, have mercy.**

**P**—May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life.

**All**—**Amen.**

(The Gloria is omitted.)

### Collect

**P**—Let us pray. (Pause)

O God, author of every mercy and of all goodness, who in fasting, prayer and almsgiving have shown us a remedy for sin, look graciously on this confession of our lowliness, that we, who are bowed down by our conscience, may always be lifted up by your mercy.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever.

**All**—**Amen.**

## LITURGY OF THE WORD



### First Reading (Ex 17:3–7) (Sit)

*The Lord's gift of water reminds us of the life-giving water that Jesus speaks of in the Gospel.*

### A reading from the Book of Exodus

IN THOSE DAYS, in their thirst for water, the people grumbled against Moses, saying, "Why did you ever make us leave Egypt? Was it just to have us die here of thirst with our children and our livestock?" So Moses cried out to the LORD, "What shall I do with this people? A little more and they will stone me!" The LORD answered Moses, "Go over there in front of the people, along with some of the elders of Israel, holding in your hand, as you go, the staff with which you struck the river. I will be standing there in front of you on the rock in Horeb. Strike the rock, and the water will flow from it for the people to drink." This Moses did, in the presence of the elders of Israel. The place was called Massah and Meribah, because the Israelites quarreled there and tested the Lord, saying, "Is the Lord in our midst or not?"

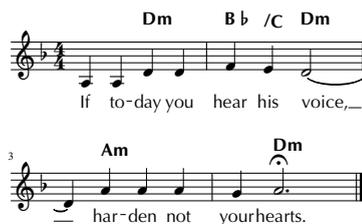
—The word of the Lord.

**All**—**Thanks be to God.**

## Responsorial Psalm (Ps 95)

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

P. Octobre, ssp



**1.** 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)

**2.** 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)

**3.** 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)

### Second Reading

(Rom 5:1–2, 5–8)

*Through Jesus, God pours into our hearts what we thirst for: faith, hope, and the Spirit—the Giver of life.*

### A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Romans

BROTHERS AND SISTERS: Since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith to this grace in which we stand, and we boast in hope of the glory of God.

And hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us. For Christ, while we

were still helpless, died at the appointed time for the ungodly. Indeed, only with difficulty does one die for a just person, though perhaps for a good person one might even find courage to die. But God proves his love for us in that while we were still sinners Christ died for us.

—The word of the Lord.  
**All —Thanks be to God.**

**Verse before the Gospel**  
(Cf. Jn 4:42, 15) *(Stand)*

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

**Gospel** *(Short form)*  
(Jn 4:5–15, 19b–26, 39a, 40–42)

**P**—A reading from the holy Gospel according to John  
**All—Glory to you, O Lord.**

JESUS came to a town of Samaria called Sychar, near the plot of land that Jacob had given to his son Joseph. Jacob's well was there. Jesus, tired from his journey, sat down there at the well. It was about noon.

A woman of Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give me a drink." His disciples had gone into the town to buy food. The Samaritan woman said to him, "How can you, a Jew, ask me, a Samaritan woman, for a drink?" — For Jews use nothing in common with Samaritans. — Jesus answered and said to her, "If you knew the gift of God and who is saying to you, 'Give me a drink,' you would have asked him and he would have given you living water." The woman said to him, "Sir, you do not even have a bucket and the cistern is deep; where then can you get this living water? Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us this cistern and drank from it himself with

his children and his flocks?" Jesus answered and said to her, "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again; but 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." The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water, so that I may not be thirsty or have to keep coming here to draw water."

"I can see that you are a prophet. Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain; but you people say that the place to worship is in Jerusalem." Jesus said to her, "Believe me, woman, the hour is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. You people worship what you do not understand; we worship what we understand, because salvation is from the Jews. But the hour is coming, and is now here, when true worshipers will worship the Father in Spirit and truth; and indeed the Father seeks such people to worship him. God is Spirit, and those who worship him must worship in Spirit and truth." The woman said to him, "I know that the Messiah is coming, the one called the Christ; when he comes, he will tell us everything." Jesus said to her, "I am he, the one who is speaking with you."

Many of the Samaritans of that town began to believe in him. When the Samaritans came to him, they invited him to stay with them; and he stayed there two days. Many more began to believe in him because of his word, and they said to the woman, "We no longer believe because of your word; for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is truly the savior of the world."

—The Gospel of the Lord.  
**All—Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

**Homily** *(Sit)*

**Profession of Faith** *(Stand)*  
*(Instead of the Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed, especially during Lent and Easter Time, the baptismal Symbol of the Roman Church, known as the Apostles' Creed, may be used.)*

**All—I believe in God, the Father almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, (at the words that follow, up to and including the Virgin Mary, all bow.) who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried; he descended into hell; on the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty; from there he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen.**

**Prayer of the Faithful**

**P**—Brethren, the Lord is truly our Savior. Let us then ask the Father to give us the living water that we may never thirst again as we say:

**R—Father, through the living water, quench our thirst.**

**C**—Help our Church leaders become channels of your living water in their ministry and service to the flock under their care. We pray: **(R)**

**C**—Quench the inner longings of our national and local leaders that they may become more merciful and compassionate in both their public and private life. We pray: **(R)**

**C**—May all families draw life and love from the living water so that, every parent, son and daughter, sibling, and kin, may become means of your forgiveness and reconciliation. We pray: **(R)**

C—Let our departed loved ones draw eternal life from the living water. We pray: (R)

C—Let us pray for the urgent concerns of our community and our personal intentions (*pause*). We pray: (R)

P—Quench our inner thirst, dear Father, that we may also become channels of your grace through Jesus Christ our Savior and our living water.

All—Amen.

LITURGY OF  
THE EUCHARIST



Presentation of the Gifts  
(Stand)

P—Pray, brethren...

All—May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands for the praise and glory of his name, for our good and the good of all his holy Church.

Prayer over the Offerings

P—Be pleased, O Lord, with these sacrificial offerings, and grant that we who beseech pardon for our own sins, may take care to forgive our neighbor.

Through Christ our Lord.

All—Amen.

Preface: The Samaritan Woman

P—The Lord be with you.

All—And with your spirit.

P—Lift up your hearts.

All—We lift them up to the Lord.

P—Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All—It is right and just.

P—It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation, always and everywhere to give you thanks, Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God, through Christ our Lord.

For when he asked the Samaritan woman for water to drink, he had already created the gift of faith within her and so ardently did he thirst for her faith, that he kindled in her the fire of divine love.

And so we, too, give you thanks and with the Angels praise your mighty deeds, as we acclaim:



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All—Holy, Holy, Holy... (Kneel)

Acclamation (Stand)

All—We proclaim your Death, O Lord, and profess your Resurrection until you come again.

THE COMMUNION RITE

The Lord's Prayer

All—Our Father...

P—Deliver us, Lord...

All—For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours now and forever.

Invitation to Peace

Invitation to Communion

(Kneel)

P—Behold the Lamb of God...

All—Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed.

Communion Antiphon

(Jn 4:13-14)

For anyone who drinks it, says the Lord, the water I shall give will become in him a spring welling up to eternal life.

Prayer after Communion

(Stand)

P—Let us pray. (Pause)

As we receive the pledge of things yet hidden in heaven and are nourished while still

on earth with the Bread that comes from on high, we humbly entreat you, O Lord, that what is being brought about in us in mystery may come to true completion.

Through Christ our Lord.

All—Amen.

THE CONCLUDING RITES

P—The Lord be with you.

All—And with your spirit.

Prayer over the People

P—Bow down for the blessing. (Pause)

Direct, O Lord, we pray, the hearts of your faithful, and in your kindness grant your servants this grace: that, abiding in the love of you and their neighbor, they may fulfill the whole of your commands.

Through Christ our Lord.

All—Amen.

P—And may the blessing of the almighty God, the Father, and the Son, (†) and the Holy Spirit come down on you and remain with you for ever.

All—Amen.

Dismissal

P—Go in peace, glorifying the Lord by your life.

All—Thanks be to God.