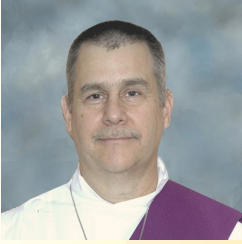


## Homily Rerun: March 19, 2017 - Deacon Bruce



Today's readings speak to us about being thirsty. The first reading tells us how the Israelites were grumbling to Moses about being thirsty. They hadn't been gone from Egypt very long and had already forgotten about the cruel treatment they had received from Pharaoh as slaves and the wonderful gift of freedom they had received from God. They were thirsty, but what did they really thirst for? Yes, they were physically thirsty for water, but they also had hardened their hearts and could no longer feel their deep hidden thirst for God.

Today's Gospel tells us the story of the woman at the well. She came to the well because she needed water, she was also thirsty, but what was she really thirsty for? Perhaps her five ex-husbands and the current man in her life speak of a spiritual thirst for love, hope and faith.

We are thirsty too. Do we know what we are thirsty for? Do we know what will satisfy our thirst? St. Augustine wrote in his Confessions, **"You have made us for yourself, O Lord, and our heart is restless until it rests in you."** Our heart is thirsty for God. Psalm 42 says, **"As the deer longs for streams of water, so my soul longs for you, O God. My soul thirsts for God, the living God."** Psalm 63 states, **"O God, you are my God— for you I long! For you my body yearns; for you my soul thirsts, Like a land parched, lifeless, and without water."** Job 19:26 says, **"And from my flesh I shall see God; my inmost being is consumed with longing."** Psalm 130:5-6, **"I wait with longing for the LORD, my soul waits for his word. My soul looks for the Lord more than sentinels for daybreak."**

We may try to satisfy that thirst, fill that longing, with many things: money, material possessions, fame, affirmation from other people, alcohol, drugs, partying, and the list goes on and on. We cannot fill that longing, because things of this earth can't fulfill our longing for God. Once we understand what we are longing for, and understand that nothing of this world can satisfy it, we can quit trying to fill it up with things *not* of God.

So what do we do with our longing? We start with prayer. We start with a conversation with God and acknowledge that we know we long for Him. We cannot do it on our own. In John 15:5, Jesus tells us, **"I am the vine, you are the branches. Whoever remains in me and I in him will bear much fruit, because without me you can do nothing."**

One of the closing prayers in the Liturgy of the Hours goes, **"Father, may everything we do begin with Your inspiration and continue with Your saving help. Let our work always find its origin in You and through You, reach completion."** Jesus needs to be our guide in everything we do. He is the Truth, the Way, and the Life. He should always be our focus in everything we do.

Did you know that Jesus thirsts too? When Jesus shouted from the cross, "I thirst!" He was not thirsting for water. In his humanity He was thirsting for God. In His divinity, He was thirsting to exchange our sins with His Glory.

The night before the Solemnity of Epiphany the Lord asked St. Jerome, in a dream, to give Him a gift for the Epiphany. In response to Jesus, St. Jerome said, "I give you my life." The Lord said, "No! I do not want your life for I gave it to you." St. Jerome said "Okay, Lord take my intelligence." The Lord said to him, "But I gave it to you." The Lord then said to him, "Give Me something I do not have." St. Jerome became confused and asked, "Lord, is there anything I have that was not given to me by you?" When the Lord saw his confusion He said to him, "Give me your sins and I will give you my holiness." At this point, St. Jerome could not hold back his tears.

Today, right now, Jesus wants you to give Him your sins that He will exchange for His holiness. When Jesus says to us, "Give me a drink," He wants you to exchange your sinfulness for His Holiness.

Are we following the prayer from the Liturgy of the Hours? Does everything we do begin with God's inspiration? Does our work, whatever that may be, always find its origin in God and through Him, reach completion? Do we come into his presence with thanksgiving and joyfully sing psalms to Him as our Psalm today tells us? Are we ready to give up our sins, even those we are very attached to, to exchange them for God's holiness and glory?