**“Water & Holy Spirit”**

All our readings today point us to the gifts of the Holy Spirit. God in His compassion and mercy promised to pour down His Holy Spirit along with His other gifts on those who believe in His only begotten Son. To those who believe, His gift of the living Water, will bring them from darkness into the light of Christ and from death into life. They will never thirst again because they would be led spiritually in their hearts by the invisible grace of God. They will be born again and become the children of God.

In our first reading, the children of Israel in the desert, grumbled against God to Moses. They grumbled against God whose power in many ways, they had witnessed both in Egypt and on their journey in the desert.

By His mighty power, God freed them from slavery both spiritually and physically from Pharaoh and the Egyptians. Spiritually, they were able to freely worship God, offer sacrifices and make atonement for their sins. Physically, they were no longer working under tremendous pressure as slaves under a tyrant.

In their rebellion, they lacked faith, trust, and hope in God. Their lack of faith in God when they were thirsty, made them question if God was with them or not! It was as if they were saying to, God, you brought us out of slavery to make us die of thirst in the desert. You did not intend to free us but secretly kill us. Their lack of trust showed in their not trusting in the goodness and the love of God. They could not wait on the will of God. Their lack of hope showed in their despair in questioning if God was with them.

In response to their lack of trust, God still performed another miracle by bring water out of a rock. The rock is a symbol of Christ who gives the gift of eternal life. The water is a symbol of the gift of the Holy Spirit who leads us to eternal life. The water they received, from the rock was to sustain only an earthly life. Even though God knew in time, they would offend Him again. God was patient with them hoping they would come to know Him and trust in His mercy, goodness, and love.

We too, sometimes lack faith, trust, and hope in God. We doubt if God would save us from a disaster instead of believing in His providence. We then lack peace in our hearts.

In our second reading, St Paul told the Romans that through faith in Jesus Christ, (a faith that their ancestors did not have,) they have received the grace of the Holy Spirit. It is through this grace that they could boast of entering into the eternal glory of God. Their hope is in the assurance of God who does not disappoint.

Paul reminded them that even though we are sinners, God sent down His only begotten Son to die a brutal death at our hands. It is only by His death, that we could receive the Holy Spirit He promised will remind His Apostles all He taught them, and guide them to all truth. In short, humanity was in great darkness because of sin when God sent His only begotten Son to lay down His life for us.

Our Gospel reading, is a beautiful story of how God works with compassion to bring sinners back to Himself. Jesus was on His way to Jerusalem to fulfill the will of His Father. Tired, He sat at a well in Samaria during the middle of the afternoon, while His apostles went to buy food at a nearby town.

Lo and behold, there comes a woman to draw water from the well. Jesus asked the woman for a drink, starting a beautiful dialogue between them. The woman responded by castigating Jesus for asking for a drink from her a Samaritan, whom Jews do not associate with.

Most of us who have peeled an onion layer by layer know that doing so bring tears into our eyes. In a similar way, Jesus invited the woman to look deeper into her life and lifestyle and did the same for the woman. The woman tried a couple of times to change the narrative. But Jesus kept the story on track. At first the woman tried to change the subject to who was greater between Jesus and Jacob.

But Jesus kept going with the subject of the story by responding that His spring of water, wells up to eternal life. The woman tried to change the subject again by asking for water from Jesus so she would not have to keep coming back to the well. Then Jesus asked her to go get her husband. The woman responded by saying she had no husband. To which Jesus responded that she had had five husbands and the sixth man in her life was not her husband.

Sometimes some of us try to change the subject of God’s message by sticking to an ideology that takes us away from the message of God. We end up drifting into a place where what we profess to believe is so different from what we belief.

From that point on, the resistance of the woman was broken and she had an epiphany that Jesus must be a prophet. She then tried to change the subject again by talking about the Messiah. But Jesus was already ahead of her and told her He is the Messiah. The woman ran back to the city to tell everyone that she met someone who told her, the story of her life.

 The water Jesus talked about is the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit satisfies all our longing for love that we all hunger for. The Holy Spirit is the **“spring of water welling up to eternal life.”** He wants to bring us to the joy of eternal salvation. He is the love between the Father and the Son.

 Like the woman, most people who enter into bad relationships, do so because they are in search of the love they did not get from a parent. It could be the love of a father or of a mother. They end up looking for love in all the wrong places. When we love God first, then the rest will follow.

As we come with the utmost reverence to receive Jesus in the Eucharist, let us asking Him for more of His gifts of the Holy Spirit.