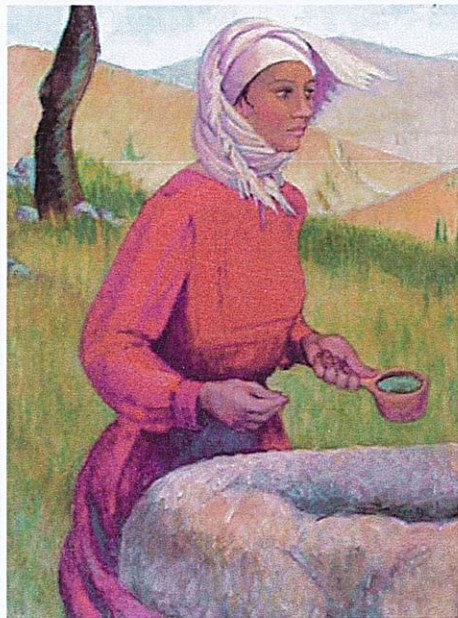


Our Faith on Sunday

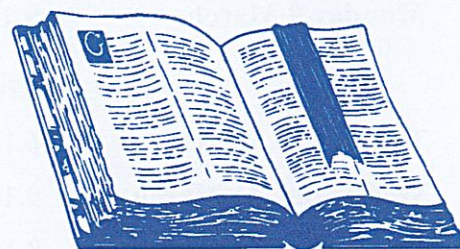
GOSPEL REFLECTION



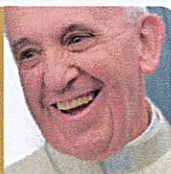
Before being a set of doctrines Christianity is a personal encounter with Jesus. This is what we see portrayed in the account of the Samaritan woman

meeting Jesus at the well. This woman represents all of us who are caught up in the affairs of this world symbolised by the material need for water; and perhaps, like the Samaritan woman, we have all sorts of difficulties in our relationships with others. We approach life as a series of problems to be resolved, hoping for the best but fearing the worst. Then, out of the blue, Jesus enters our lives offering us the gift of divine life, a life we never even dreamed of. He offers us the water that quenches our true thirst: the thirst for God. As St. Paul tells us, this water which is the love of God is poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us. However, like the Samaritan woman, we must ask for this water. By our very nature we all experience spiritual thirst but it requires an act of humility to admit that we cannot quench this thirst through our own resources. We may be

under the illusion that we can quench this thirst by filling up our lives with material possessions or with projects of self-fulfilment based on personal success in business, politics, the arts, entertainment. But it is an illusion and one way of understanding the Lenten season is to see it as an opportunity to recognise all the ways in which we try to mask our spiritual thirst. Let us hope that in the coming weeks we may, like the Samaritan woman, encounter Jesus and say to him, "Sir, give me this water so that I will not be thirsty".



POPE FRANCIS' ENCYCLICAL
FRATELLI TUTTI
BROTHERS AND SISTERS ALL



THE ULTIMATE FOUNDATION

274. From our faith experience and from the wisdom accumulated over centuries, but also from lessons learned from our many weaknesses and failures, we, the believers of the different religions, know that our witness to God benefits our societies. The effort to seek God with a sincere heart, provided it is never sullied by ideological or self-serving aims, helps us recognize one another as travelling companions, truly brothers and sisters. We are convinced that "when, in the name of an ideology, there is an attempt to remove God from a society, that society ends up adoring idols, and very soon men and women lose their way, their dignity is trampled and their rights violated. You know well how much suffering is caused by the denial of freedom of conscience and of religious freedom, and how that wound leaves a humanity which is impoverished, because it lacks hope and ideals to guide it".²⁶³

263. Address to the Leaders of Other Religions and Other Christian Denominations, Tirana, Albania (21 September 2014): *Insegnamenti* II, 2 (2014), 277.

Jubilee of Seminarians

Meditation Pope Francis Angelus
15 March 2020

The promise of living water that Jesus made to the Samaritan woman becomes a reality in his Passion: from his pierced side flowed "blood and water" (Jn 19:34). Christ, the Lamb, immolated and risen, is the wellspring from which flows the Holy Spirit who remits sins and regenerates new life. This gift is also the source of witness. Like the Samaritan woman, whoever personally encounters the living Jesus feels the need to talk about him to others, so that everyone might reach the point of proclaiming that Jesus "is truly the saviour of the world" (Jn 4:42), as the woman's fellow townspeople later said. Generated to new life through Baptism, we too are called to witness the life and hope that are within us. If our quest and our thirst are thoroughly quenched in Christ, we will manifest that salvation is not found in the "things" of this world, which ultimately produce drought, but in he who has loved us and will always love us: Jesus, our Saviour, in the living water, that he offers us.



ENTRANCE ANTIPHON

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

Cf. Ps 24: 15-16

GOSPEL

John 4:5-15, 19b-26, 39a, 40-42

The Lord be with you.
And with your spirit.

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John.

Glory to you, O Lord.

At that time: Jesus came to a town of Samaria called Sychar, near the field that Jacob had given to his son Joseph. Jacob's well was there; so Jesus, wearied as he was from his journey, was sitting beside the well. It was about the sixth hour.

A woman from Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, 'Give me a drink.' (For his disciples had gone away into the city to buy food.) The Samaritan woman said to him, 'How is it that you, a Jew, ask for a drink from me, a woman of Samaria?' (For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.) Jesus answered her, 'If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that 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 have nothing to draw water with, and the well is deep. Where do you get that living water? Are you greater than our father Jacob? He gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did his sons and his livestock.' Jesus said to her, 'Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again. The water that I will give him 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 will not be thirsty or have to come here to draw water. Sir, I perceive that you are a prophet. Our fathers worshipped on this mountain, but you say that in Jerusalem is the place where people ought to worship.' Jesus said to her, 'Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father. You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking 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 Messiah is coming — he who is called Christ. When he comes, he will tell us all things.' Jesus said to her, 'I who speak to you am he.'

Many Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman's testimony. So when the Samaritans came to him, they asked him to stay with them, and he stayed there two days. And many more believed because of his word. They said to the woman, 'It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is indeed the Saviour of the world.'

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

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 neighbour.

Through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

COMMUNION ANTIPHON

Jn 4:13-14

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

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

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.
Amen.

COLLECT

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.

Amen.

FIRST READING

A reading from the Book of Exodus.

Exodus 17:3-7

In those days: The people thirsted for water, and the people grumbled against Moses and said, 'Why did you bring us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and our livestock with thirst?' So Moses cried to the LORD, 'What shall I do with this people? They are almost ready to stone me.' And the LORD said to Moses, 'Pass on before the people, taking with you some of the elders of Israel, and take in your hand the staff with which you struck the Nile, and go. Behold, I will stand before you there on the rock at Horeb, and you shall strike the rock, and water shall come out of it, and the people will drink.' And Moses did so, in the sight of the elders of Israel. And he called the name of the place Massah and Meribah, because of the quarrelling of the people of Israel, and because they tested the LORD by saying, 'Is the LORD among us or not?'

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM

Psalm 95(94):1-2. 6-7b. 7c-9. R. 7c, 8a

**R. O that today you would listen to his voice!
'Harden not your hearts.'**

Come, let us ring out our joy to the LORD;
hail the rock who saves us.
Let us come into his presence, giving thanks;
let us hail him with a song of praise.

O come; let us bow and bend low.
Let us kneel before the LORD who made us,
for he is our God, and we the people,
the people of his pasture, the flock of his hand.

O that today you would listen to his voice!
'Harden not your hearts as at Meribah,
as on that day at Massah in the desert
when your forebears put me to the test;
when they tried me, though they saw my work.'

SECOND READING

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

Romans 5:1-2, 5-82

Brothers and sisters: Since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God, and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.

For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. For one will scarcely die for a righteous person — though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die — but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

ACCLAMATION BEFORE THE GOSPEL

**Glory to you, O Christ, you are the Word of God.
Lord, you are indeed the Saviour of the world;
give me living water, so that I will not be thirsty.
Glory to you, O Christ, you are the Word of God.**

Cf. John 4:42, 15