

Give Me a Drink

The gospel for this coming Sunday (Third Sunday in Lent) is John 4:5-26. This is the story of Jesus and the Samaritan woman at the well in Sychar.

Samaria was a whole region, not simply the city. It was made up the 10 tribes or Northern Kingdom of Israel. Samaritans descended from Israelites left behind after Samaria's destruction (722 BC) and included foreigners imported by Assyrian kings. The Jews saw the Samaritans as half breeds and avoided going through Samaria when traveling from Judea to Galilee.

Jesus took the most direct path between Judea and Galilee. God's will and plan required this route for the sake of those in Samaria. Our text is an outstanding story of Jesus Christ's love—overcoming ethnic and religious prejudice for the sake of a soul.

Jesus speaks to the Samaritan woman, breaking the social barriers between Jews and Samaritans and between men, especially a rabbi, and women. He who has been left behind by his disciples (v 8) leaves these barriers behind to tell the woman about a better "water" that she could receive.

Time and occasion were favorable, since they were undisturbed, the disciples, as the evangelist notes, having gone to the city to buy food for the little company.

Jesus uses his human need for a drink of water to start a conversation with her. He moves from physical water to the spiritual water for eternal life. She is all for this water but it proves she does not fully understand who Jesus is and what he has to offer. Jesus gently leads her to see that her life as it has been, comes up short. From her discussion with Jesus, the woman shows that like the Jews, she is looking for a savior that is based on human thoughts.

Jesus' patience never waivers as he tenderly leads her to see that he is the prophet she and others were looking for when he plainly says "I who speak to you am he."

We draw great comfort from this narrative. We were born in sin and were outside the family of God. But through Holy Baptism we were brought into his kingdom. Through his word we are brought ever closer to him. In the Lord's Supper Jesus gives us his body and blood and has us taste and see how much he loves us.

Prayer: Dear Lord Jesus, thank you for so loving me by bringing me into your kingdom and continuing to strengthen my faith through your Word and Sacrament. Amen