

Homily 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of lent 2016

WHEN IS THE LAST TIME YOU WERE THIRSTY? I MEAN...I'M DYIING OF THIRST....THIRSTY? A DAY STANDS OUT IN MY MIND.....IT WAS LATE AUGUST, 1967..... TWO-A-DAY FOOTBALL PRACTICES AT LAKE PROVIDENCE HIGH SCHOOL WHERE I GREW UP. WE HAD PRACTICED THAT MORNING AT DAYLIGHT, BUT WERE BACK AGAIN IN FULL PADS FOR THE AFTERNOON WORKOUT.....IN WHAT I'M SURE WAS NEAR 100 DEGREE HEAT....ON A DUST BOWL OF A FIELD, WE PRACTICED FOR ABOUT AN HOUR, WITH NO WATER BREAKS OF COURSE., BEFORE THE COACH DECIDED WE WERE NOT HUSTLING AND HE THOUGHT WIND SPRINTS MIGHT MOTIVATE US..... AFTER RUNNING BACK AND FORTH IN THE DUST BOWL.....FOR WHAT SEEMED LIKE A LIFETIME..... COACH DECIDED WE WEREN'T RUNNING HARD ENOUGH FOR THAT EITHER.....SO HE PRESCRIBED A 4-BLOCK BRISK JOG DOWN TO THE LEVEE AT THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER WHERE WE PROCEEDED TO RUN UP AND DOWN THE SIDE OF THE LEVEE UNTIL HE FELT WE WERE SHOWING ENOUGH ENTUSIASM, WHICH ENDED UP BEING 10 TIMES.....AND THEN BACK TO THE DRESSING ROOM..... TO DIE....OR AT LEAST IT FELT LIKE IT....I CAN CONFIDENTLY SAY..... IT'S AS THIRSTY AS I'VE EVER BEEN IN MY LIFE.

(2)

IN TELLING THAT STORY I RELIVE THAT THIRST.....THE PAIN, THE FRUSTRATION AND THE HELPLESSNESS THAT COMES WITH KNOWING WHAT YOU NEED.....BUT HAVING NO WAY TO SATISFY IT.....

BUT THERE ARE NEEDS THAT ALL OF US HAVE..... THIRSTS IF YOU WILL.....THAT WE ARE YET UNAWARE OF....A THIRST FOR APPROVAL.... RECOGNITION....LOVE....JUST TO NAME A FEW....

TODAY'S SCRIPTURES SPEAK TO BOTH KINDS OF THIRSTS...

IN TODAY'S SCRIPTURE FROM EXODUS, AFTER MOSES RESCUED THE JEWS FROM THE SLAVERY OF THE EGYPTIANS, HE LED THEM INTO THE DESERT ...BUT THEY COMPLAIN TO MOSES...."**DID YOU BRING US FROM EGYPT JUST SO THAT WE COULD DIE OF THIRST**"!!! AFTER GOD HAD RESCUED THEM....PARTED THE RED SEA....AND DECIMATED THE EGYPTIANS IN BRINGING THEM TO FREEDOM.....THEY PUT GOD TO THE TEST AT **MASSA AND MERRIBA**....MASSAH... IN HEBREW MEANS "TESTING" AND MERRIBAH, MEANS 'DISSATISFACTION' ... AND WE KNOW THE STORY.....THEIR COMPASSIONATE GOD.....RISES TO THE OCCASION...AND IN A MIRACLE.....**WATER FLOWS FROM A ROCK**.....HE GIVES THEM THE WATER THEY SEEK..... BUT HE ALSO GIVES THEM. SOMETHING THEY DIDN'T KNOW THEY NEEDED....FAITH....A RENEWED FAITH....A RENEWED TRUST IN HIM....IN GOD.....

(3)

IN OUR GOSPEL, JESUS, THIRSTY FROM HIS JOURNEY, SAYS TO THE

SAMARITAN WOMAN AT THE WELL; **“GIVE ME A DRINK”!**

THIS REQUEST SETS THE STAGE .....FOR AN UNLIKELY MEETING

BETWEEN A JEW AND A SAMARITAN.....BETWEEN A SINFUL

WOMAN AND ... HER SAVIOR....

THINK ABOUT IT....THIS SAMARITAN WOMAN WAS AN OUTCAST IN HER

TOWN....SHE WAS AT THE WELL WHEN NO OTHER WOMEN WERE

THERE.....SHE SPOKE TO A STRANGE MAN ...

...A JEW AT THAT.....SHE'D HAD 5 HUSBANDS ...AND SHE WAS WITH

SOMEONE, JESUS SAYS, THAT WAS NOT HER HUSBAND.....SHE WAS AN

OUTCAST .....AND IN THIS UNLIKELY ENCOUNTER..

JESUS REVEALS HER TRUE THIRST..... HER NEED FOR.....

DIRECTION IN HER LIFE....FORGIVENESS....COMPASSION.....AND

HOPE.....AND BEFORE THE DAY WAS DONE.....SHE DISCOVERED....THAT

IN THIS JESUS...THROUGH THIS “LIVING WATER OF WHICH HE SPOKE”

ALL COULD BE SATISFIED..... SHE RECEIVED WHAT SHE DIDN'T REALIZE

SHE NEEDED....JUST LIKE THE JEWS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT.....THESE

SCRIPTURES ARE PERFECT EXAMPLES OF HOW GOD CAN..... AND

DOES...WORK IN OUR LIVES.....**HOW HE REVEALS OUR INNER MOST**

**THIRSTS**.....

(4)

THE CHURCH CHOOSES THESE SCRIPTURES SPECIFICALLY FOR THE  
THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT BECAUSE TODAY WE BEGAN (**BEGIN**)  
THE FIRST OF THREE SCRUTINES FOR THE ELECT WHO CONTINUE THEIR  
JOURNEY IN RCIA TOWARD BAPTISM, CONFIRMATION AND THE HOLY  
EUCHARIST..... AT THE EASTER VIGIL. AND  
WHILE THIS SCRUTINY TODAY IS (**WAS**) FOR THE “UNBAPTISED”  
MEMBERS IN RCIA.....AS (**THINK ABOUT**) (I LOOK) (**LOOKED**) **ALL THOSE**  
**MOVING THROUGH THIS PROCESS**, (CATACUMENS AND THE  
CANDIDATES ALIKE)....YOU KNOW WHAT I SEE (**SAW**) MEN AND  
WOMEN..... WITH A THIRST FOR TRUTH.....KNOWLEDGE....AND  
FAITH.....THEY THIRST FOR GOD IN THEIR LIVES.....AND I DON'T KNOW  
ABOUT YOU.....BUT THAT INSPIRES ME.....AND IT SHOULD.... INSPIRE ALL  
OF US. THEY'VE GONE TO CLASS...THEY'VE STUDIED AND READ.....BUT  
THE BEAUTIFUL PART IS.....THEY HAVE CHANGED.....ALREADY.....AND ITS  
NOT EVEN EASTER.....AND THEY'VE CHANGED NOT JUST BECAUSE  
THEY LEARNED ABOUT THE CATHOLIC CHURCH.....BUT BECAUSE THEY  
ARE DISCOVERING GOD IN A NEW WAY...THEY ARE ALLOWING GOD TO  
BE PRESENT WITH THEM IN A NEW WAY.....AND THE POINT OF ALL THIS  
IS.....WHEN WE ALLOW THIS TO HAPPEN....THAT'S WHEN OUR INNER  
MOST THIRSTS.... ARE REVEALED TO US, BY GOD.

(5)

**(8:30AM ONLY)..... (WE ARE PROUD OF YOU.....WE SUPPORT YOU...  
WE ADMIRE YOUR DEDICATION...AND WE ARE SO EXCITED FOR YOU  
AND OUR CHURCH....TO JOURNEY TOGETHER WITH YOU TO THE  
JOYOUS CELEBRATION OF EASTER....)**

YOU KNOW, IT'S AMAZING HOW THINGS SEEM TO COME TOGETHER  
FOR US WHEN WE'RE DOING THE RIGHT THINGS.....WHEN WE'RE OPEN  
TO GOD.....INVOLVING GOD IN OUR LIVES AND WHAT WE DO.....  
IN THE MATTHEW KELLY BOOK MANY OF US ARE READING NOW.....  
"FOUR SIGNS OF A DYNAMIC CATHOLIC" HE ENCOURAGES US TO  
BECOME **THE VERY BEST VERSION OF OUR SELVES**" AND HE HAS  
A DYNAMIC PLAN TO DO THAT WHICH WE ARE DISCOVERING ONE BY  
ONE.....BUT THE PROCESS..... START AND ENDS WITH GOD.....SO NO  
MATTER WHO WE ARE.....OR WHERE WE ARE IN OUR FAITH JOURNEY  
TODAY.....MAKING A CONCIOUS EFFORT TO BRING GOD  
INTO EVERYTHING WE DO..... CHANGES OUR LIVES..... JESUS WALKED  
INTO THE LIFE OF A SAMARITAN WOMAN, AN OUTCAST IN HER  
COMMUNITY, AND INSPIRED HER TO LEAD HER WHOLE TOWN TO  
BELIEVE IN HIM.

(6)

MOSES, A REFUGEE FROM EGYPT....WHO CONSIDERED HIMSELF  
UNWORTHY.....AND INCAPABLE OF THE MISSION GOD GAVE  
HIM.....RESCUED AND LED THE ENTIRE JEWISH  
NATION OUT OF SLAVERY AND TO THE PROMISED LAND.  
SO NOW.....HOW DO **WE** OPEN UP TO GOD....SO HE CAN REVEAL  
...OUR INNER THIRST....HOW DO **WE** INVOLVE GOD IN OUR LIVES.....

BECOME THAT.... "BEST VERSION OF OURSELVES"??????

I HATE TO SAY "IT'S SIMPLE", BUT.....IT'S SIMPLE.....

MOSES TALKED AND LISTENED TO GOD.....THE SAMARITAN WOMAN  
AT THE WELL TALKED AND LISTENED TO JESUS.....GOD....KING DAVID  
TALKED AND LISTENED TO GOD....SOLOMON TALKED AND LISTENED TO  
GOD....THE APOSTLES AND SAINT PAUL TALKED AND LISTENED TO  
GOD....MOTHER THERESA TALKED AND LISTENED TO GOD.....AND  
POPE FRANCIS TODAY.....TALKS AND LISTENS TO GOD.....

CAN IT BE THAT EASY????? I THINK IT CAN!!!!

(7)

IN IT'S SIMPLEST FORM..... BECOMING THE BEST VERSION OF  
OURSELVES.....STARTS AND ENDS WITH GOD.....BUT ANY JOURNEY  
STARTS WITH A SINGLE STEP.....AND THAT STEP IN THIS CASE.....IS  
PRAYER.....A SIMPLE CONVERSATION...TALKING AND LISTENING TO THE  
ONE WHO LOVES US MOST.....GOD!!!!!!

IT'S SO POWERFUL.....IT'S SO SIMPLE.....

I CAN TELL YOU FOR A FACT THAT AS LONG AS I CAN REMEMBER IN MY  
LIFE....I BELIEVED IN GOD....I WENT TO CHURCH.....

BUT IT WAS NOT UNTIL I STARTED TALKING TO GOD....AND LISTENING.

THAT I BEGAN TO BECOME A BETTER VERSION OF MYSELF... THE  
VERSION OF MYSELF GOD REVEALED I COULD BE.....

YOU KNOW WHEN I FINISH MY HOMILIES....LIKE THIS ONE....I ASK GOD  
WHAT THOUGHT HE WANTS ME TO LEAVE WITH YOU....AND TODAY,  
ON MY WAY TO A SOCCER GAME FOR MY GRANDSON....IN THE CAR....I  
SAID O.K. GOD.....WHAT SHOULD LEAVE THEM WITH?????? AND HERE'S  
HIS MESSAGE;

I LOVE YOU!!!!!!! LET'S TALK!!!!!!

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