

(English translation)

Rome, 1969

## Without Excluding Anyone

“If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, ‘Give me a drink...’” (Jn 4:10).

Jesus does not stop to answer the Samaritan woman about the quarrels existing between Jews and Samaritans. His is a language which strikes, enraptures, transports from earth to heaven.

His heart seems to burst from his chest in its desire to give the best thing he has brought to earth: the gift of God. He wants to give two things to human beings: grace and the knowledge of He who gives this ‘living water’.

‘Living water!’ (Jn 4:10).

It's magnificent! Do we realize this? Living water. Living.

Life lives in whoever knows and possesses life. It is the same with God's grace: it is the soul's life.

Jesus is amazing! How little we know him unless we read the Gospel with love.

In fact, we have often made our own image of him, following some worn-out traditional form of piety. But in the Gospel he appears as he is: He is God. He continually reveals himself to be *God*. A God ... who speaks, who is tired, who walks, who has disciples ... a Man-God. That's how it is!

And then further on comes that answer!

‘I am he, the one who is speaking to you’ (Jn 4:26).

This reduces us to silence. Yes, Jesus did not exclude anyone. Each person, whoever they may be, are deeply worthy of our respect and trust. To the Samaritan woman who has many husbands and not one that is her own, Jesus reveals himself fully. He speaks to her so divinely well, with the simplicity that God alone knows how to use: ‘I am he, the one who is speaking to you.’ I in flesh and bones. Not a ghost. Not someone far away. I, here.

Oh Jesus, I would have liked to have seen you. Your eyes, your face, your manner, your graciousness. But all we can do is wait a few years, and therefore conclude matters quickly in order to obtain a passport direct to heaven, by paying in advance for purgatory while on earth. Paradise, Paradise! My God, let this always be my spontaneous desire. When this happens, a great goal will indeed have been reached.

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