

Word of Life, March 2002

“Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, but those who drink of the water that I will give them will never be thirsty. The water that I will give will become in them a spring of water gushing up to eternal life.” (Jn 4:13-14).

Jesus’ conversation with the Samaritan woman near Jacob’s well is a real “pearl” of the Gospel. There, he spoke of water as the simplest of resources, but one that proves to be the most wanted and the most vital for whoever is familiar with the desert. He did not need to go into detail to convey the importance of water.

We need spring water for our natural life, whereas we need the living water that Jesus speaks of for eternal life.

Just as the desert blooms only after abundant rainfall, similarly the seeds buried in us at baptism can grow only if watered by the Word of God. Then the plant grows, produces new shoots and becomes a tree or a very lovely flower, all because it receives the living water of the Word of God that gives life and preserves it for eternity.

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Jesus says these words to all of us who are thirsting in this world. He says them to those who are aware of their spiritual dryness and who still feel thirsty, and to those who no longer realize they need to drink from the fountain of true life and draw on the great values of humanity.

Actually, Jesus is extending an invitation to all men and women today, revealing where we can find the answer to our questions and fulfil all our desires.

It is up to us, therefore, to draw on his words and let ourselves be imbued with his message.

How?

By re-evangelizing our life and comparing it with his words, by trying to think with the mind of Jesus and love with his heart.

Every time we try to put the Gospel into practice, it is like drinking a drop of that living water. Every gesture of love for our neighbour is a sip of that water.

Yes, because that water, which is so alive and precious, has something special about it. It wells up within us each time we open our heart to others. It’s God’s wellspring, which pours out water in the measure that its deep streams quench the thirst of others through small or big acts of love.

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So we’ve understood. To avoid being thirsty, we must give others the living water that we draw from God within us.

At times, giving just a word, a smile or a simple gesture of solidarity is enough to bring us a renewed sense of fulfilment, of deep satisfaction and a wave of joy. If we carry on giving, this wellspring of peace and life will pour out water that is ever more abundant and will never dry up.

Jesus revealed another secret to us, like a bottomless well we can draw from. When two or three are united in his name, loving one another with his same love, he is in their midst (cf. Mt 18:20). Then we will feel that we are free, that we are one and full of light, with streams of living water flowing from within us (see Jn 7:38). Jesus's promise will be fulfilled because the thirst-quenching water that wells up for eternity, flows from Jesus himself present among us.

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