

## Homily Summary – 3rd Sunday of Lent (Year A)

**Short Overview:** In this Lenten homily we are invited to examine our deepest longings. Drawing from the Scriptures of God's provision of water in the desert and Jesus offering "living water" to the Samaritan woman, we're reminded that all human hearts thirst for love, meaning, purpose, and true happiness. Only God - perfect love, goodness, and beauty - can fully satisfy this thirst, both now and eternally in heaven.

### **Main Points**

- Humanity is inherently "thirsty": beyond physical needs, we crave direction, fulfillment, and love. As St. Mother Teresa observed, people are not just hungry for food but hungry for love (and thirsty for God).
- Worldly pursuits (wealth, praise, etc.) offer temporary relief but ultimately leave us unsatisfied.
- God alone quenches our deepest desires, providing peace and satisfaction through closeness to Him.
- In this life, God eagerly offers this fulfillment; in heaven, it will be perfected by complete union with Him.
- We receive this "living water" through heartfelt prayer, the Sacraments, and anything that deepens our relationship with God.
- The scrutinies (ancient RCIA rites for the Elect preparing for baptism at Easter) are a time of heart-examination and purification - not just for catechumens, but a call for all of us to scrutinize our lives and draw nearer to God, imitating Mary's openness to the Holy Spirit.

### **Key Bible Verses**

- Exodus 17:1-7 - God provides water from the rock for the thirsty Israelites in the desert (a foreshadowing of Christ as the spiritual Rock, cf. 1 Corinthians 10:4).
- John 4:1-42 (Woman at the Well) - Jesus offers "living water" that becomes "a spring of water welling up to eternal life" (John 4:14), satisfying the woman's deeper spiritual thirst.
- Note also the implicit ties to Jeremiah 2:13 (forsaking the fountain of living waters) and John 7:37-38 (Jesus' invitation: "Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink").

### **Catechism References**

- CCC 2560-2561 - Prayer is the encounter of God's thirst for us with our thirst for Him; Jesus thirsts so we may thirst for Him, revealing the wonder of prayer at the well.
- CCC 2652 - The Holy Spirit is the "living water" welling up to eternal life in the praying heart, teaching us to receive it from Christ.

### **Reflection Questions**

- What am I truly thirsting for right now - love, purpose, security, approval? How have I tried to satisfy it with "broken cisterns" instead of God?
- Where in my life do I sense God's invitation to drink from His living water through prayer or the Sacraments?
- During this season of scrutinies, what area of my heart is God calling me to examine and open more fully to Him?
- How can I imitate Mary's fiat - her total openness to the Holy Spirit - in responding to God's call today?

### **Rhyme summary:**

What are you thirsting for deep in your soul? For love, for meaning, to be made whole?  
In desert sands, God gave water to flow, at Jacob's well, Jesus offered more to know.  
We chase fleeting things—wealth, praise, delight— yet only God's love can quench us aright.  
Through prayer, Sacraments, with hearts open wide, living water flows, drawing us to Jesus' side.  
This Lent, we scrutinize where we stand today, drawing near to the Lord – letting our holy thirst lead the way!

### Some Scriptural reasons to come to Mass each weekend

**Exodus 20:8** - "Remember the sabbath day, and keep it holy."

**Acts 2:42** - "They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers."

**Hebrews 10:24-25** - "And let us consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day approaching."

**Luke 22:19** - "Then he took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, 'This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.'"

**John 6:53-54** - "So Jesus said to them, 'Very truly, I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood have eternal life, and I will raise them up on the last day.'"

**Matthew 18:20** - "For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them."

**Psalms 122:1** - "I was glad when they said to me, 'Let us go to the house of the Lord!'"

**Colossians 3:16** - "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God."

### Additional resources to learn more about God and the Catholic faith

- Check out the resource list available on [www.frmerkley.com](http://www.frmerkley.com)
- Catholic Answers: <https://www.catholic.com/>
- Word on Fire: <https://www.wordonfire.org/>
- Formed: <https://formed.org/>
- The Coming Home Network: <https://chnetwork.org/>
- Catholic Exchange: <https://catholicexchange.com/>
- Dynamic Catholic: <https://dynamiccatholic.com/>
- The Augustine Institute: <https://augustineinstitute.org/>
- Ascension Press: <https://ascensionpress.com/>
- EWTN: <https://www.ewtn.com/>
- The Catholic Company: <https://www.catholiccompany.com/>
- Busted Halo: <https://bustedhalo.com/>
- CatholicCulture.org: <https://www.catholicculture.org/>
- The Thomistic Institute: <https://thomisticinstitute.org/>
- Ignatius Press: <https://www.ignatius.com/>
- Catholic Education Resource Center (CERC): <https://www.catholiceducation.org/>