

GOSPEL

John 4:5-7, 9-11, 13-29, 40-42

Jesus came to a Samaritan city called Sychar, Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired out by his journey, was sitting by the well. It was about noon.

A Samaritan woman came to draw water, and Jesus said to her, 'Give me a drink.' The Samaritan woman said to him, 'How is it that you, a Jew, ask a drink of me, a woman of Samaria?' Jesus answered her, 'If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, "Give me a drink", you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water.' The woman said to him, 'Sir, you have no bucket, and the well is deep. Where do you get that living water? Jesus said to her, '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.' The woman said to him, 'Sir, give me this water, so that I may never be thirsty or have to keep coming here to draw water.'

Jesus said to her, 'Go, call your husband, and come back.' The woman answered him, 'I have no husband.' Jesus said to her, 'You are right in saying, "I have no husband". The woman said to him, 'Sir, I see that you are a prophet. Jesus said to her, 'Woman, believe me the hour is coming when you will worship neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. The hour is coming when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth. The woman said to him, 'I know that Messiah is coming.' 'When he comes, he will proclaim all things to us.' Jesus said to her, 'I am he, the one who is speaking to you.'

Then the woman left her water-jar and went back to the city. She said to the people, 'Come and see a man who told me everything I have ever done! He cannot be the Messiah, can he?'

So when the Samaritans came to him, they asked him to stay with them; and he stayed there for two days. They said to the woman, 'It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is truly the Saviour of the world.'

HOMILY OF POPE FRANCIS

15 March 2020

The Gospel (cf. Jn 4:5-42) tells us about a dialogue, a historical dialogue. - it is not a parable, it happened - of Jesus' encounter with a woman, with a sinner.

It is the first time in the Gospel that Jesus declares His identity. And He declares it to a sinner who had the courage to tell Him the truth: "These men were not my husbands" (cf. vv. 16-18). And then with the same argument, she went to proclaim Jesus: "Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did. Could this be the Messiah?" (cf. v. 29). She did not go with theological arguments - as she perhaps wanted in the dialogue with Jesus: "On this mountain, on the other mountain..." (cf. v. 20). She goes with her truth. And her truth is what sanctifies her, it justifies her. It is her truth that the Lord uses to proclaim the Gospel.

We cannot be Jesus's disciples without our own truth, that which we are. One cannot be disciple of Jesus with arguments alone: "On this mountain, on the other one..." This woman had the courage to dialogue with Jesus - because these two peoples did not dialogue with each other (cf. v. 9); she had the courage to take interest in Jesus' proposal, in that water, because she knew she was thirsty. She had the courage to confess her weaknesses, her sins. Rather, she had the courage to use her history as a guarantee that He was a prophet. He "told me everything I ever did" (v. 29).

The Lord always wants transparent dialogue, without hiding things, without dual intentions: "I am like this". I can speak with the Lord this way, just as I am, with my own truth. Thus, from my own truth, by the power of the Holy Spirit, I find the truth: that the Lord is the Saviour, He Who came to save me and to save us.

This transparent dialogue between Jesus and the woman ends with that confession of the Messianic reality of Jesus, and with the conversion of those people [of Samaria], with that field that the Lord saw was flowering, that came to Him because it was ripe for harvest (cf. v. 35).

May the Lord grant us the grace to pray always with the truth, to turn to the Lord with our own truth, not with others' truth, not with truths distilled in debates: "It is true, I had five husbands. This is my truth" (cf. vv. 17-18).

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REFLECTION QUESTIONS

What stood out to you from the Gospel or Reflection/
Homily?



Head: What does it mean to say that Jesus is Truth and Living Water?



Heart: The woman had the courage to share her life story with Jesus. How do you feel about Jesus' invitation to share your life story with him, with all its vulnerability?



Hands: How might you share your life story with Jesus more personally this week?

PRAYER

Spend some time in prayer with one another:

1. Conscious of what has just been shared, members briefly name/ describe their prayer needs.
2. Intentionally call on the Holy Spirit to be present (e.g. "Come Holy Spirit, please be present as we pray")
3. Offer prayers of thanks and praise to God.
4. Pray for each others' prayer needs. Where appropriate, you may like to encourage the group to place a hand on the shoulder of the individual that you are currently praying for.
5. Conclude your prayer time with another prayer of praise, perhaps praying the 'Glory Be'.