

Third Sunday of Lent: The Samaritan Woman: Thirst for God

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A few blocks from my home in Mexico City, there is a place where people arrive carrying many things. Some come with plastic bags holding all they own. Others arrive with children who are restless, curious, or already tired of being told to wait. There are those who step in out of loneliness, others drawn by hunger, and some simply because they know that inside, someone will greet them by name and remember who they are.

This is the weekly rhythm of [Comunidad de Sant'Egidio](#). What forms there is not a service line, but a table. Conversations unfold slowly. Stories are shared without urgency. Differences (of age, history, belief, or stability) do not disappear, but they are held together. It is not a place where anyone arrives as a project to be fixed. It is a place where people arrive thirsty, in different ways, and discover they are not alone.

This experience helps me hear the Gospel of the Samaritan woman differently.

At the center of the encounter is thirst

When Jesus meets her at the well, he does not approach her as a problem to be solved or a lesson to be taught. He meets her as a conversation partner. She is perceptive, grounded, and theologically curious. She asks real questions: about shared resources, social codes, and belonging. She is not passive. She does not simply receive. She engages, challenges, and responds.

At times, this passage has been read through the lens of exposure and correction rather than encounter. But the Gospel itself resists that framing. Jesus does not shame her. He does not demand repentance before a relationship. Instead, he speaks to her about living water, about worship in Spirit and truth, about a God who is not confined to the places or systems that exclude her.

At the center of the encounter is thirst. Not moral failure, but longing. Not judgment, but desire.

Christ, Living Water for our deepest thirst

This is where *Dilexit Nos* offers a key: “*The pierced heart of Christ embodies all God’s declarations of love present in the Scriptures... the open side of his Son is a source of life for those whom he loves, the fount that quenches the thirst of his people.*” (DN 101) Christ’s heart is open not only to forgive, but to sustain. Not only to correct, but to give life.

The Samaritan woman recognizes this. She leaves her water jar behind—not because her daily needs no longer matter, but because something deeper has been awakened. Her thirst has been named without being diminished. She becomes a witness not by adopting a moral stance, but by sharing an encounter: “Come see.”

Honest about our own thirst, attentive to the thirst of others

This resonates deeply with the [Laudato Si’ Goal](#) for this week: *Responding to the cry of the poor*. The cry of the poor is not only a demand for resources, nor only for access to what sustains life—like water, land, and safe places to live. It is also a cry to be recognized as subjects of their own lives: bearers of insight, faith, and truth. In Sant’Egidio, the poor are not objects of charity. They are friends, teachers, and protagonists of the community, reminding us that care for people and care for our common home cannot be separated.

When we imagine ourselves too easily in the place of Jesus, we risk missing the invitation of the Gospel. Lent does not ask us to stand above others as righteous helpers. It asks us to stand beside one another at the well, honest about our own thirst, attentive to the thirst of others.

The reflection question lingers gently: *Whose thirst am I being invited to hold in my heart this week?* Perhaps it is the thirst of someone too often misunderstood. Perhaps it is the thirst of a child, a neighbor, a community under pressure. Perhaps it is our own. At the well, Jesus shows us that God is already there—waiting, listening, ready to meet us not as problems to be fixed, but as people longing for life.